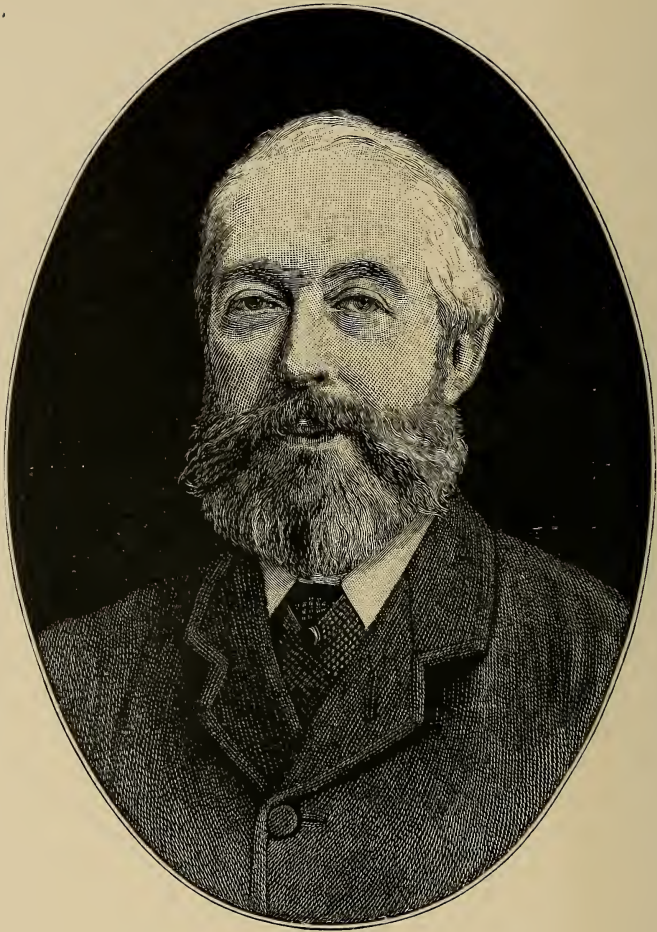


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THE LIFE AND LETTERS
OF
HENRY CECIL RAIKES





Yours very sincerely
Henry Cecil Parker

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THE LIFE AND LETTERS
OF
HENRY CECIL RAIKES

LATE
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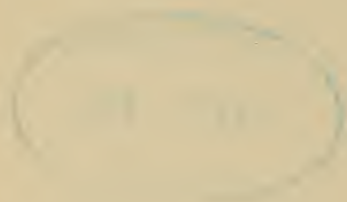
BY
HENRY ST. JOHN RAIKES



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1898



P R E F A C E.

So far as the matter of the present memoir is concerned, I have endeavoured, while preserving a certain degree of continuity, to select from a large and heterogeneous mass of material (the sorting and arrangement of which alone occupied two years) such events as appear either to have personal value or to be of public interest.

In some instances I have relied upon my own memory, or drawn upon the recollections of relations and friends, but, as far as possible, I have depended upon documentary evidence.

Many interesting episodes in which others played a leading part are necessarily touched on lightly, or altogether excluded; but in the latter portion of the work, which deals mainly with Mr. Raikes's career at the Post Office, I have not hesitated, where in the interests of truth it seemed necessary, to lift the official veil which so often tended to obscure his

actions, and to create false impressions in the mind of the public.

I cannot more fitly close this preface than by expressing to all those who have helped me in my work my most hearty thanks for their kindly assistance.

HENRY ST. JOHN RAIKES.

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INTRODUCTION.

HENRY CECIL RAIKES was born at the Deanery, Chester, on November 25, 1838, and, after a public career of some distinction, died at Llwynegrin on August 24, 1891, in his fifty-third year.

His father, Henry Raikes, of Llwynegrin Hall, Flintshire, for many years Registrar of the Diocese of Chester,—during his tenure of office a position of considerable emolument and importance,—married Lucy Charlotte, second daughter of the venerable Francis Wrangham, F.R.S., Archdeacon of Craven and Canon Residentiary of Chester, of whom it may be briefly recorded that he was an eminent scholar, and the companion of the most brilliant men of letters of his day, from Sir Walter Scott to Sydney Smith. He was also a noted book-collector, and the sale of his library in 1842 aroused widespread interest in Bibliophile circles.

Henry Raikes had ten children (five sons and five daughters), of whom Henry Cecil Raikes, the subject of this memoir, was the eldest son. Henry Raikes himself was the eldest son of the Reverend and Worshipful Henry Raikes, Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester, the intimate friend and counsellor of Bishop Sumner throughout his occupation of that See up to the time of his elevation to the Archbishopric

of Canterbury, and the author of numerous erudite treatises.

Both by the paternal and maternal line Henry Cecil Raikes was of Yorkshire lineage, although throughout his life he always preferred to identify himself with the place of his birth.

The Wranghams are an ancient Yorkshire family, and the Raikeses also hail from the county of many acres, for the first English home of their remote Danish forbears (who spelt their names indifferently "Reckes," "Raikes," or "Rakes") was in the East Riding.

Of their ancestors, the first to bring himself prominently before the public was Thomas Raikes, Mayor of Kingston-upon-Hull in 1633, 1642, and 1643, who took a leading part in resisting the Royalist forces, as recorded in the following curious minute, dated September 30, 1643, taken from the Corporation books of that place:—

"At the Election of Mayor for the year to come the Burgesses assembled taking into consideration Mr. Mayor's (Thomas Raikes) vigilance and carefulness of the Town's affairs the year past and his fidelity to the Publick Cause and the great danger that the Town is now in being at present strongly beleagured by the Earl of Newcastle's Forces lying nigh and daily shooting into the Town with their great ordnance, earnestly prayed Mr. Mayor either to continue Mayor as he is, or otherwise that he would be elected Mayor again for the Year to come ; he consented when Lord Fairfax, Governor, came into the said Assembly and requested him to do so, assuring him that his extraordinary charge would be satisfied him by the Publick, and divers of the Burgesses then undertaking that his charge should be borne."

Thomas's elder brother, Robert, was Henry Cecil

Raikes's direct ancestor; and his great-grandson Robert, son of the Vicar of Hessele, migrated early in the last century to Gloucester, where he became proprietor of the *Gloucester Journal* (in which capacity he was summoned to the bar of the House of Commons and severely admonished for having published an account of certain debates therein), and eventually Mayor.

His son Robert, of whose early labours an interesting account appeared in the June number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1784, became known to fame as the philanthropic founder of Sunday schools; his son William returned to Hull; his son Richard, a Canon of Gloucester, married the beautiful Miss Mee, Lord Palmerston's aunt; and his son Thomas, who married Charlotte, a daughter of the Hon. Henry Finch, achieved success as a Russian merchant and Governor of the Bank of England.

Of Thomas Raikes's children, his eldest son, in turn named Thomas (who contrived to run through three fortunes), was the well-known dandy and *dilettante*, the companion of Brummell, Alvanley, Count Pozzo di Borgo, and other notables of his time, whose journal, edited by Mr. Charles Greville, and published in 1856, had considerable vogue in its day, and, indeed, quite recently was described by the late Sir Robert Morier, a few weeks before his death, as "not one of the best, but the best book of its kind;" his second son, Henry, Bishop Sumner's Chancellor, and grandfather of Henry Cecil Raikes, has already been alluded to; his son Richard followed in his footsteps, and became Governor of the Bank of

England in 1833; his son George became a partner in Currie's Bank; and his daughters married—one, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and another Lord William Fitzroy.

Chancellor Raikes, as he was commonly known, lived at Deeside, Chester, now the Bishop's palace, and his son Henry (the father of Henry Cecil Raikes) took up his abode at Llwynegrin, in the county of Flint, some twelve miles distant, in 1848. The last-named distinguished himself at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and did not suffer his scholarship to grow rusty in later life. He was a good mathematician, a fair classic, and a learned constitutional lawyer. His interest in politics was academic rather than practical, although he twice contested Derby in the Conservative interest in 1849 and 1857. By training a man of business, by inclination a student, he devoted much of his spare time to historical research, and his history entitled "A Popular Sketch of the Origin and Development of the English Constitution, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time," dedicated to the University of Cambridge (of which the first volume was published in 1851), was favourably received by the reviewers, and generally admitted to be a work remarkable alike for clearness and accuracy. He personally supervised the early training of Henry Cecil Raikes, who proved an apt pupil, but he did not live to see the seeds which he had sown come to full maturity, as he died in 1863, shortly before his son's twenty-fifth birthday.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS
OF
HENRY CECIL RAIKES
(1838-1891)

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THE LIFE AND LETTERS
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CHAPTER I.

BORN in the year of the Queen's Coronation, 1838, Henry Cecil Raikes early in life gave indications that he was endowed with more than average ability ; and those to whom his education and training were committed were not slow to predict for him a brilliant and distinguished career.

But, although for many years he took a prominent part in the public life of the country, made for himself a considerable reputation, and ordinarily was regarded as a successful man, these anticipations were not realized in their entirety.

When we take into consideration his natural gifts, which embraced great decision of character and tenacity of purpose, an intellect which enabled him to grasp easily and comprehensively the intricacies of complicated and widely differing subjects, a mind stored with the most varied culture, and no small

share of conversational and social ability, and add to these the untiring industry and perseverance which so constantly astonished his fellow-workers,—we may feel some surprise that the confident prophecies of those who had watched his intelligence expand were not more literally fulfilled, and that the measure of his success was not greater than it actually was. But the explanation is not far to seek. Two causes, one material and the other moral, contributed in varying degree to bring about this result.

In the first place, although Mr. Raikes inherited a fair independence, he was never a wealthy man ; and, as time went on, expensive election contests, and losses of divers kinds, made considerable inroads upon his original capital. From a very early period he had to toil unremittingly in order to supplement an income insufficient in itself to meet the requirements of his position—especially when out of office—and outside his political labours there were few days in the year on which he did not accomplish what many men would have regarded as a full task in itself. It is unnecessary to dwell upon his devotion to his public duties, and it will suffice to say that, however great the pressure of private affairs might be, these always came first. The result was that, sometimes for months together, he not only did not know what it was to have a holiday, but systematically crowded two days' business into one.

I do not think that the quality of his work suffered appreciably thereby, or that his advance as a politician was materially retarded, although the tax on his

physical and mental powers was, of course, immense. He, nevertheless, paid the penalty in full when, at the age of fifty-two, with such success as he had striven for almost within his reach, over-strained nature gave way.

Such success might, perhaps, have come earlier, at a time when he could have grasped it, but for the existence of the second or moral obstacle.

Mr. Raikes was endowed by nature with a spirit of sturdy independence. When his mind was once made up as to the right course to be pursued in any particular instance, either by himself or by his leaders, it was difficult to wean him from his opinion by considerations of mere expediency. Unbending by nature, he had scant sympathy with that moral weakness which strives always to conciliate and never to conquer. For his own part, when a question of principle was involved, he ever declined to give way. In minor matters he showed himself sufficiently forbearing, but even in these, if a contest were forced upon him (and it seldom was unless he had selected his ground), he would rarely entertain any suggestion of compromise. Nevertheless, when the day was won, his generosity to his vanquished opponent was, as a rule, no less remarkable than the relentless vigour with which he had up to that time assailed him. And he was no mean adversary. Cool, self-reliant, and far-seeing, he never struck at random, and was quick to detect weak points, and to drive his advantage home. With his whole attention concentrated on the ultimate rather than on any proximate result, he pursued the line of

conduct he had marked out for himself, outwardly unmoved by praise or blame. No man can hope to avoid mistakes altogether, but when given a free hand he was, on the whole, remarkably successful; and the knowledge of this fact had, perhaps, a tendency to augment his natural impatience of control.

It must not, however, be inferred from this description that Mr. Raikes was lacking in diplomacy. Those who were brought most closely in contact with him had frequent cause to admire the tact with which, on behalf of himself or of others, he would unravel a knotty situation, or find a way of escape when difficulties closed around. Another point, which was, I think, not fully recognized by his leaders, is that, in spite of his natural propensity for fighting, his opponents had small success in tempting him to defend untenable positions, or, indeed, to engage at all unless he had made his footing sure.

It has been often said that the breath of a Government of the present day is "compromise." And the powers that rule are so profoundly impressed with the truth of this doctrine that they will, in nine cases out of ten, strain every nerve to avoid a conflict, even when they have right on their side, and, in addition, hold the winning cards. The forcible mode of procedure has few charms for a Ministry as a whole; and the man who openly advocates its exercise on occasion, and as openly chafes when restrained by prudent timidity, is looked upon with small favour.

There is no reason to suppose that the latter-day

leaders of the Conservative party failed to appreciate Mr. Raikes's abilities, and the untiring service he rendered to the cause. Nevertheless, although when in power they offered him posts of dignity and public importance, they—not unnaturally from their own point of view—preferred to bestow places, the possession of which would enable their holders' influence to make itself really felt in the inner circle of the Ministry, upon men of more flexible disposition than the subject of this memoir.

How Mr. Disraeli would have acted in the matter had he been spared a few years longer, it is, of course, impossible to say with certainty. He paid Mr. Raikes a high compliment in 1874, when he entrusted him, at the age of thirty-six, with the control of our great National Assembly; for he might, instead, have given him some minor post, or, indeed, have passed him over altogether without exciting particular remark. That he did neither, argues that even thus early he had formed a high opinion of Mr. Raikes's judgment and force of character; while, from the nature of the appointment selected, it may, perhaps, be reasonably inferred that he had an inkling of Mr. Raikes's autocratic bent.

On the whole, it seems probable that had the "old Chief" been at the head of affairs in 1885 and 1886, Mr. Raikes would have been afforded a less restricted opportunity of making his mark than actually fell to his lot; for Mr. Disraeli, undoubtedly, had the knack of turning to account qualities which to men whose

powers of intuition were less developed appeared merely defects, or at best inconvenient gifts.

It is, however, quite possible that, in spite of the disadvantages I have enumerated, Mr. Raikes would, in the end, have justified the predictions of his friends, had the usual span of life been allotted to him. His death in his fifty-third year—an age at which many men of ability only begin to make a name for themselves in political life—came at a time when he was probably entitled to look forward to the future with confidence. As Chairman of Committees from 1874 to 1880 he had made considerable mark, and though to the outside world his reputation had appeared to suffer for a time in consequence of the criticisms of his policy at the Post Office, his judgment had been very largely vindicated by the results obtained. The difficulties with which he had had to contend successively for five years were, at the moment, either overcome or smoothed away. Every branch of the Service had benefited to some degree beneath his sway. Steady and progressive reform of abuses and anachronisms had done its work within the Office; and constant and consistent endeavours to improve postal facilities and to extend the sphere of usefulness of the Service had (although much remained to be accomplished) at length borne fruit without. Among the higher officials, with some few important exceptions, Mr. Raikes was popular almost from the first. The lower grades were slower to appreciate his merits, but in time they learnt that, though he was not to be trifled

with, he was inflexibly just, and that his real concern for their welfare impelled him to give the most anxious personal consideration to all grievances or complaints which found their way to the Office.

The result was that, when in July, 1891, he bade farewell to St. Martins-le-Grand, everything was in a high state of order and efficiency in the department; his vast army of subordinates was in the main content and prosperous; while his own reputation as an administrator stood higher than it had done at any previous time during his tenure of the position of Postmaster-General.

It is unnecessary at this point to enter into any detailed examination of his services as Head of the Postal Service or as Chairman of Committees, for these will be dealt with in their proper place; and before passing to earlier scenes I will merely remark that the sketch which I have drawn above does not purport to be a complete picture. It is merely an outline of an explanatory character, giving prominence to certain qualities which, in conjunction with circumstances, exercised, in the writer's judgment, a restraining influence upon the full development of Mr. Raikes's career as a statesman.

Mr. Raikes's early training was undertaken mainly by his father, a gentleman of considerable attainments in several branches of learning, and an historian of some repute in his day. The boy, in spite of his tender years, took an intelligent interest in the

compilation of his father's *magnum opus*, his "Constitutional History;" and, encouraged by the author to discuss with him many of the abstruse questions dealt with in it, he early enlarged his horizon, and learnt to think and reason in a manner more appropriate to a grown man than to a child.

Although Mr. Raikes was "almost brought up on a diet of English Constitution," as he once remarked many years later, his other studies were by no means neglected, and when at the age of eleven, in company with his brother Francis (now a Q.C. and County Court Judge), he was placed under the care of that eminent scholar, the late Dr. Kennedy, at Shrewsbury, he rose so rapidly in the school that at the age of thirteen he became a member of the Sixth Form.

At first the quiet home-bred boy found it difficult to accommodate himself to his new life. Accustomed to the constant companionship of his father, and to the refining influence of his accomplished mother, the general roughness and the ordinary trials and hardships of public-school life seemed to him for a time unbearable, as his early home letters testify. He was already very tall, and to a schoolboy height is a considerable disadvantage. His weakness renders him an easy prey to his sturdier tormentor, while his size renders him ridiculous when in trouble, and excludes him from any hope of pity.

However, like most healthy-minded boys, Mr. Raikes settled down in due course, and, when he had learnt to hold his own, enjoyed to the full his school

life, in which he played a prominent part, both in the class-room and in out-of-door pursuits.

His early letters, although perhaps a little above the ordinary standard, can only be called remarkable in one respect, namely, that in them the writer hardly ever failed to inquire tenderly after the progress of "the history," even when fullest of his own pleasures or woes.

Dr. Kennedy, amongst his other accomplishments, was a scientific wielder of the rod, and for his first few years at school Mr. Raikes, with proper schoolboy affectation, appeared to take for granted a natural feeling of animosity between master and pupil, and an equally natural propensity on the former's part to revel in the delight of inflicting condign punishment. For instance, in one letter he says, "The doctor still continues very ill, but was well enough to flog C. to-day;" and later he mentions that the doctor is again unwell, "But he is in a very good temper, nevertheless, in consequence of his having flogged P. yesterday."

Some of his descriptions of his preceptor's occasional outbursts are both quaint and patronizing, and give an indication of the spirit of quiet humour which rendered him in later years so admirable a *raconteur*.

His political instincts began to develop after little more than a year at school, and from the time that he was promoted to the Sixth Form, in 1852, his letters are full of allusions to public affairs, and to the position of parties in the House of Commons.

In 1853, Dr. Kennedy entrusted his young nephew

to his charge—appreciative testimony to the steadiness of the boy of fourteen—and the sense of responsibility thus cast upon him had not a little to do with the rapid expansion of some of his best traits. In the same year was laid the foundation of Mr. Raikes's love for the works of Thackeray, which he retained to the close of his days. He would never admit that Dickens could in any sense be compared with his great rival, and his juvenile verdict on "Vanity Fair," which he described as "beating Dickens out of sight," was never modified. The early development of one of his most marked characteristics is exemplified in a letter to his mother, in which he announced that he had been made a "præposter," or monitor, and added—

"I feel so strange in this new place (Head Room), and, you know, I was quite the chief in the private room, and it is such a change to be nobody here."

He did not, however, long remain a "nobody." By rapid degrees he rose to the second place in the school, the first being held by the late Mr. Arthur Holmes, one of the most brilliant scholars ever turned out by Shrewsbury, who was some years his senior. Try as he would, Mr. Raikes could never manage to overtake his leader, although on occasion he ran him very close; but their rivalry was of the most friendly nature, and the closest intimacy existed between them.

The constant effort stimulated the younger boy's faculties to a marked extent, and Dr. Kennedy's

judicious and highly valued praise encouraged him to set up a very high standard before himself. He possessed considerable talent for versification, which he continued to cultivate throughout his life, and this gift especially appealed to his master. In a letter to his father, dated May 26, 1854, Mr. Raikes alluded to this branch of his studies.

“We have had examination in elegiacs this afternoon, of which I did a tolerable set, as I supposed, but at calling-over K. called me up and told me there were several very good lines, and one as good as a pentameter could be. The English was ‘And long demurs breed new delays,’ which I rendered ‘*Longa novae semper fit mora causa morae.*’”

In September, 1854, Mr. Raikes took part in his first debate, the subject being the morality of the school. He took up arms for the defence, and in a subsequent letter says—

“I came in with some weight as being able to say that no one had ever seen me smoke and drink at any tavern since I had been there.”

At Shrewsbury, so it seems, such proceedings were by no means uncommon at the time.

Early in 1855 Mr. Raikes mentioned incidentally that the Doctor had been examining Holmes and himself on the Craven and Porson papers, and thought them good enough to send up, though he did not suppose they were eligible; and a few days later he informed his father that Dr. Kennedy had begun to lecture on his history, of which the second volume had been completed during the previous year.

The concluding sentence of the letter in which this information was contained evinces a good deal of discernment when we remember that the writer had not long passed his sixteenth birthday. It runs—

“I have been reading some of Macaulay’s ‘Essays,’ which I have bought. He has a most mischievous knack of seeming to view things without any party bias, and yet gives a very liberal impression.”

The next extract sufficiently explains itself. Under date March 25, 1855, Mr. Raikes writes:—

“We have been having the most amusing correspondence here. It is always the custom for the head boy to write a Latin letter to the Judges, who without more ado ask for a half-holiday. This time Holmes wrote to Lord Campbell,* who, to our surprise, sent us back a bantering Latin letter to ask what we meant. Holmes and I therefore concocted him another epistle, which he was civil enough to answer again, and to write to K. in Latin too.”

Mr. Raikes himself subsequently received many similar letters after successful elections, and on like occasions, from the head of his old school for the time being.

Twice during his school career Mr. Raikes was instrumental in saving a schoolfellow from drowning. The first time was in 1853, when he closed a modest letter descriptive of the circumstances in the following words:—

“I am sure you will thank God with me, dearest mamma, for His great kindness in saving myself and enabling me to help another.”

* At that time Lord Chief Justice.

The second occasion was in 1855, and he wrote home :—

“I am positively the most fortunate fellow in the world, but fear I am not thankful enough for it: fancy, I have again saved a fellow from drowning, and this time a friend, Macfarlan. He went under three times before I could get to him, and he was so heavy when I had got hold of him that I should have sank too if I had had far to go.”

Mr. Raikes was confirmed at home in October of the latter year, and, his friend Holmes having left for Cambridge, became head of the school about the same time. He was also appointed captain of the football team, and huntsman.

As head boy, Mr. Raikes was brought into very close relations with Dr. Kennedy, and it was mainly during the last year of his school life that he learnt to love and value his preceptor, and to regard him in the light of a friend rather than that of a master. That this feeling was cordially reciprocated is evidenced by a charming note written to him at Christmas, 1855, in which the “Doctor” subscribes himself, “Yours affectionately;” while subsequent events amply proved its permanent character.

During his last year at school, which terminated in the summer of 1856, Mr. Raikes carried all before him. Writing on February 4, 1856, he remarked—

“We have done examination now, and it will be given out to-morrow. I suppose I shall get another prize thereby. K. is going to give me Hallam’s works well-bound for my others.”

While Mr. Raikes was gaining credit at school, its

former head was making his mark at Cambridge. On March 12, 1856, the first-named wrote triumphantly—

“We have received the news of Holmes being elected First Bell’s Scholar and Craven University Scholar, the first freshman elected University Scholar for thirty-one years, since Peile of Repton. . . . What a wonderful fellow Holmes is! I feel quite an awe when I think that I was next him, though a long way off.”

From this time, as can be gathered from his letters, Mr. Raikes’s one desire was to enter on his University course at the earliest possible moment. Doubtless, Mr. Holmes’s brilliant successes had fired his ambition, and in the absence of serious rivalry at Shrewsbury the longing for a larger stage rapidly grew irresistible.

Although, in the first instance, his father practically declined to consider the matter, by insistence he gained his point, and against the wishes and advice of Dr. Kennedy—who was very anxious to supervise his studies for another year—he was permitted to leave school in June, 1856, and to enter into residence at Trinity College, Cambridge, the October following, some weeks before his eighteenth birthday.

CHAPTER II.

WITH the idea of strengthening his mathematics—always his weakest point—Mr. Raikes spent a few weeks during the summer of 1856 with the Rev. A. T. Paget, at Kirstead Rectory, in Norfolk. His sojourn there demands no particular notice, and I only mention it because in one of his letters allusion is made to his pedestrian powers, in the exercise of which he always took great delight. The letter is dated September 9, and after describing a visit to some relations, the writer added—

“Thence I walked back to Wymondham, which I did faster than I have ever walked before, *i.e.* the first three miles just under half an hour, and the four in forty minutes altogether. I walked back from Norwich to Kirstead, which I reached by ten o'clock well tired, having trudged about seventeen miles.”

This was no isolated performance, for his length of stride enabled him to cover a great deal of ground with very little exertion, and for some years six miles in the hour was within his compass.

Mr. Raikes entered formally into residence at Trinity College, Cambridge, in October, 1856, and, by what, in the light of later occurrences, may be regarded

as a coincidence, was allotted the rooms in New Court formerly occupied by Mr. S. H. Walpole, whom he subsequently succeeded as member for the University.

The matriculation examination naturally presented no difficulty, and in his description of it, on October 16, Mr. Raikes said—

“Our matriculation examination took place to-day. As there could be no question of scholarship, we determined to make it one of pace, and I beat the classics, as I cleared the paper in an hour.”

In the same letter he mentioned that Mr. W. G. Clark, who was Second Classic, and Medallist in 1842, had offered to coach him gratuitously in composition and classics generally, with a view to the Craven, which would obviate the necessity of getting a private tutor till the following term, when he proposed to join Mr. Shilleto.

University life very soon threw its glamour over him, and the ring of enthusiasm in a letter written to his mother a few days later is very noticeable—

“Life is so very pleasant up here, that it is hard to me to conceive anything more delightful. Such very nice rooms, so many friends, and such glorious freedom, leave scarcely anything to be desired. . . . I have received the most pleasant and flattering letter from Kennedy, in which he asks me to choose myself books at Deighton’s to the amount of £3 3s. for my last prizes, which I have accordingly done. I have got Gibbon, and Arnold’s ‘Roman Republic,’ which make a grand addition to my library.” He adds, “I signed the library book of the college the other day, and find I am the youngest man up here, as we have all to put our ages.”

Freedom from restraint, and the belief that he

could easily make up for lost ground when he chose to settle down to work in earnest, combined to render Mr. Raikes oblivious of the fact that a life of constant self-denial is necessary to those who aim at the highest University honours; and though he never actually neglected his studies, he certainly devoted more of his time to lighter pursuits than was prudent, in spite of his great natural abilities.

The debates at the Union held out a special attraction to him, and on November 3 he mentioned that he had taken part in one of them for the first time, the subject being the Naples question. From that time forth he was constant in his attendance, and before long became one of the most prominent members. His devotion eventually reaped its reward in his election to the Presidential Chair; but in after years he used to regard this distinction as having been rather dearly bought.

Mr. Raikes's sociable disposition soon made him a general favourite, and with no examination immediately before him except the Craven (in which he did fairly well in the spring of 1857), he gave himself up to the pleasures of the hour to a very considerable extent. His circle of acquaintances rapidly widened, and among those with whom at this time he formed a life-long friendship were the present Lord Burton and the late Sir George Young.

In 1857 velocipeding, the earliest form of bicycling, attracted his attention, and in company with his old schoolfellow, Mr. J. C. Wood, he explored a

considerable extent of the fen country on his cumbrous iron steed. On May 5 he thus describes one of his early experiences :—

“I have taken very much to velocipeding for exercise, as one can get much more than on one’s feet, and it is so much cheaper than riding. I average about six or seven miles an hour on a good road, but it soon tires one. I went twenty-four miles last Saturday, and felt as if I had no legs when I got home ; to awake, however, to a most painful consciousness of them in the morning.”

In the summer he joined a reading party presided over by Mr. Blore, at Bray, in Ireland, but his stay in that country did not furnish him with any experiences of more than passing interest. On November 10 he wrote from Cambridge—

“I lost my motion for condign punishment on the Indian mutineers, although I took the mildest view possible, and was, moreover, assisted by a most eloquent speech from a freshman, a son of Sir C. Trevelyan, and a nephew of Macaulay. The numbers were 36 for to 70 against, which may give you a very high, and at the same time just, idea of the sense and manliness of the Cambridge Union.” He adds, “We had a most exciting contest for the Union offices this time, but the party who combine considerable religious profession with the lowest Radical doctrines and the most overbearing and repulsive vulgarity succeeded, as they always do.”

A tolerably scathing denunciation !

Mr. Raikes soon formed an alliance with the “freshman” Trevelyan, who, I need hardly explain is now Sir George Trevelyan, with results most satisfactory to both of them. Writing in March, 1858,

on the subject of Lord Derby's accession to power, he says—

“ We have had a little excitement also in the Union here, as the Ministry (of the Union) have given considerable dissatisfaction, so that a very strong opposition has been organized to their management of the concern, of which Trevelyan and I are the only *speaking* members—a very pleasant arrangement, as we always have a tumultuous cheering body behind us, and generally a majority on division, without any rivals aspiring to lead the party.”

He was unsuccessful in his candidature for the Vice-Presidency of the Union in April, being defeated by “ a Kingsman named Browning ” by three votes. This proved to be merely a temporary reverse, and on February 18, 1859, he wrote triumphantly to his mother—

“ I have attained the summit of my Unionic ambition by being elected President without opposition last Monday. Kennedy will be pleased to hear this, as he took such interest in the society, and was elected President himself, beating Bulwer.”

His position did not, however, always enable him to carry the assembly with him. An instance of this is supplied by a letter written later in the year, which also shows that Mr. Raikes's ideas were occasionally in advance of his time. It runs—

“ We had a debate on Wednesday on a crotchet of mine, ‘ That the only way to check bribery at elections is punishment of the bribed,’ which brought out some fair speakers among the freshmen. It ended much as I expected—9 for, 46 against, so my eloquence was not very overpowering. . . . I do not think I have told you before this of my American

neighbour, young Everett, the son of the ex-ambassador, who, after taking all the honours at *Cambridge*, has come over to see what is to be done at Cambridge here. He is rather clever, I think, and speaks with a glorious twang."

Many of my readers must be acquainted with Mr. Everett's book upon life at Cambridge,* which subsequently held an honoured place in Mr. Raikes's library.

Some of the latter's comments upon the events of the day, and on the people with whom he was brought in contact, are worth reproducing.

Writing on November 18, 1856, he passes a severe criticism upon Dean Trench, whose course of sermons he had looked forward to with much interest—

"Trench, you know, is now preaching before the University, and is most disappointing—dry and diffuse, and, although subtle and inquiring, without a ray of animation or spark of eloquence."

In a letter written about a year later, on December 13, he is equally scathing in his comments on a lecture delivered by Dr. Livingstone—

"Which was very disappointing (to me, at least), as he told us very little about his travels, and that little in a very confused way; but dilated at considerable length on his missionary zeal, which we all know to have produced no converts in the course of his seventeen years' travel. He also made a good many remarks on the state of English society in general, of which one would have thought there might be a better judge than a Scotch mechanic who had spent the last seventeen years of his life in the heart of Africa."

* "On the Cam."

On May 18, 1858, he wrote—

“Everything here is in a wonderful state of excitement on the Ministerial crisis, and scarcely anything else is talked about. There appears to be no doubt that Lord Derby will dissolve if beaten, although the Palmerston papers, especially the *Times*, deny it so vehemently. It is explicitly stated in the *Sun* that at a second meeting, held at Cambridge House at 5 p.m. last Sunday, in order that Lord Shaftesbury might attend it after afternoon church, it was resolved, notwithstanding an energetic protest from Labouchere, to disseminate this falsehood in all the papers, although no one was better aware than Lord Palmerston that a dissolution would necessarily follow a Ministerial defeat.”

A few days later he enclosed an epigram by Mr. Shilleto, his private tutor, on the rumoured engagement of Dr. Whewell to Lady Affleck. He wrote—

“Shilleto has written an epigram on it in English Elegiacs, which you should appreciate when I tell you that Whewell wrote a long version of the Burial Service in honour of his late wife (Cordelia) in the same measure. Here it is:—

“‘Shade of Cordelia, no longer the Master of Trinity mourneth,
Nought now affects or afflicts, Whewell’s affixt and Affleckt.’”

During the Long Vacation, which he spent at Cambridge, he came across Mr. Gladstone’s “Homer,” and on August 22 thus records his impressions of it:—

“I have also skimmed Gladstone’s ‘Homer,’ *i.e.* one volume of it. It is very beautifully written, but to my mind is very absurd. No Neoplatonist of Alexandria ever found more in Homer that was not discernible to the duller eye of common sense. It seems that the Bible might be dispensed with altogether save as a commentary on the myths that are seen through a glass darkly in Homer—very darkly indeed, I think. Even the gifted sophist himself has not quite

ascertained whether *Latrona* symbolizes Eve or the Virgin Mary. He is best on Virgil, whom he attacks with as much severity as if he were answerable for Lord Palmerston's Bishops. It is curious to read Merivale at the same time, who makes out Virgil about the first of poets."

In April, 1859, Mr. Raikes had his first practical experience of electioneering at Derby, where his father was the Conservative candidate. He had, however, to return to Cambridge before the declaration of the poll in order to enter for a Trinity scholarship.

Writing on May 1 to condole with his father on his defeat, he says, "My only consolation is that I almost think you will hardly care so much about it as I do."

In the same letter he describes his first meeting with Macaulay:—

"With whom do you think I had the honour of dining last night? No other than Lord Macaulay, Lady Trevelyan and party, including K. Macaulay, the newly re-elected Conservative M.P. for this borough.

"Lord Macaulay told us, among other good things, that he had recently sent his character to a graphologist, who began by stating, 'This young man may, if he takes pains, succeed in conversation.' Another thing which was very good that he told me, was that Sir G. C. Lewis recently sat to Grant* for his picture. The painter, an uneducated man, had heard that his sitter was an author, and resolved to study his works in order to make himself agreeable. So the other day, on meeting Lady Theresa Lewis, he told her that he had been very much amused by her husband's book. She was naturally rather surprised, and asked what part he had liked best. 'Oh,' said he, 'where the devil carries away Father

* If this refers to Sir Francis, the epithet "uneducated" is hardly applicable.

Ambrosio.' Of course, the poor man had been reading 'The Monk.'"

On June 14 he wrote—

"I see there is a statement in to-day's paper that Gladstone called on Lord Palmerston last night, and had a long interview with him. If he takes office he will have abandoned the only principle to which he has ever adhered."

In October he alludes to the same distinguished statesman's approaching visit to Cambridge in order to receive the degree of LL.D.—

"The Public Orator told me to-day that he was very much bothered with the preparation of his laudatory speech about Gladstone. You see, he changed from Liberal to Conservative just about the time of Gladstone's last desertion the other way, so he is naturally in rather a dilemma."

On January 26, 1860, he writes—

"Have you heard the last definition of the three Churches, High, Broad, and Low, as Altitudinarism, Latitudinarism, and Platitudinarism? . . . There are one or two anecdotes of Macaulay flying about Cambridge. Here is one: When T. B. M. was in India a dissenting missionary stopped him one evening at his door, saying that he had waited there all day to know if he thought that Napoleon was 'the Beast.' 'Nay,' said M., 'if you look nearer home, sir, you will see that the House of Commons, 658 members, Speaker, clerks and door-keepers, make up just 665.' * Very ready, was it not?"

Although Mr. Raikes did not succeed in carrying off any of the great University prizes, his academic career proper was not without distinction. In his college examinations he invariably did well, as a long row of books inscribed with the Trinity Arms testify.

* The "number" of "the Beast."

In 1858 he entered for a Trinity Scholarship, and was unsuccessful by a very narrow margin. Writing on April 17, he says—

“I was third in classics in my year, and very nearly second, as my tutor tells me that the difference between Whiting and myself was of the smallest.”

On this occasion only two classical scholarships were given, the other three being reserved for mathematics. In 1859 he was more fortunate, in spite of the distractions of the Derby contest. On May 7 he wrote to announce his success in rather indifferent terms, and said that he was so badly treated the previous year,

“when I so certainly ought to have had one after the examination I had done, that I should have been very content to let the thing pass as far as I was concerned. It is rather curious that you should have been bothered with an election in which I took more interest than you did, and that I should have passed an examination in which you were more interested than I was.”

During his last year at the University he seems to have read with considerable steadiness, and to have made up some of his lost ground.

He came of age on November 25 of this year (1859), and at Christmas his engagement to Miss Charlotte Blanche Trevor Roper, to whom he had been attached for some time, was sanctioned by his parents. When he returned to Cambridge, in January, 1860, he was naturally very full of his newly found happiness, which served, possibly, to

distract his attention from his studies to some extent. He wrote, nevertheless, with confidence as to his prospects more than once, and on February 10 he said—

“ I imagine the order will be pretty much as the enclosed ‘prophecy,’ and that I may make my appearance, if fortunate, pretty close up with the last-named, say about tenth. There is, however, a great deal of chance in the affair, notwithstanding which, I am in very tolerable spirits about it.”

In a subsequent list he placed himself fourteenth, which was very close to the mark as affairs turned out.

The First Class in the Classical Tripos was, however, this year, 1860, limited to eleven names, and, when the result of the examination was published, Mr. Raikes found, much to his mortification, that he had not gained a place in it. Writing to his father on March 29, 1860, he says—

“ I am sure that however disappointed you will be at the enclosed abomination (the list of the Classical Tripos), you will sympathize with me rather than condemn me for a misfortune so great, and, I confess, so totally unexpected. You will observe that I am fifteenth, just about the average of my hopes, but below the irrevocable line instead of above it, as the experience of the last few years had fully justified me in expecting. I am, indeed, very sorry for the disappointment I seem destined to be to you, but am quite able to believe that even a trial like this is all for my good. I have done well in Trinity you will observe, being fourth in the year, but that is poor consolation. It is, however, altogether unprecedented that we should have only two first classes. We expected eight.”

It may be mentioned in explanation that it was

generally supposed that, as usual, the First Class would contain about seventeen names.

Mr. Raikes recurs to the subject on April 2—

“Seeing Roby, the senior examiner, in the Senate House, I asked him what was the gap between eleven and twelve, and he said ‘scarcely any,’ adding that those near the top of the second were not at all unfit for the first. The Public Orator told me afterwards that he had heard from Roby that he had a very high opinion of my classics, and thought me quite a first-class man. Adding insult to injury, is it not?”

Dr. Kennedy, though keenly disappointed at the non-success of his favourite pupil, did his best to lighten the chagrin felt by Mr. Raikes’s father, and wrote—

“I was exceedingly sorry that your eldest son missed his First Class. Of course, I knew it depended a good deal on his reading at Cambridge, because he went there a year earlier than is usual. Still, I thought the chances were many in favour of his having a place in the First Class. . . . Pray tell Cecil that we shall look to his future life to show what is in him.”

I have dwelt at some length upon the subject of Mr. Raikes’s degree, because I think that his failure to take a First rankled in his mind longer and more bitterly than any other subsequent disappointment incurred in the course of his life. This was due, in part, to the knowledge that he had not done himself full justice, and, in part, to the belief that even what he had accomplished had not met with due recognition at the hands of the authorities.

He was, no doubt, personally responsible for his failure to attain to a higher position in the list ; for he had it in him to have done much better had he really devoted himself to the task instead of, as he thought, working just sufficiently to enable him to pass muster. But this does not alter the fact that, as he anticipated, he gained a place good enough to have secured the position he coveted under ordinary circumstances. To this extent he was unfortunate, and, indeed, at the time, he and his fellow sufferers were regarded by many who were in a position to judge, as victims, not of their own incapacity, but of the caprice of the examiners in cutting down the class to such narrow limits in spite of the views of the senior member of the Board.

The subject is lightly touched upon by Dr. E. C. Clark, LL.D., one of Mr. Raikes's most intimate friends, in a brief obituary sketch, which appeared in the *Cambridge Review*, October 15, 1891, and I do not think that I can more fitly close this record of school and college days than by quoting the following extract from it :—

“Mr. Raikes's strong political views are well-known. They were impressed upon him in his very earliest years by the teaching of his father, and confirmed by his own great admiration for Mr. Disraeli. But it would be a mistake to suppose that they were merely accepted by him on the ground of authority. When I first met him as a boy at Shrewsbury School, his knowledge of modern politics was amazing. To that knowledge he never ceased to add throughout his life ; and it was mainly this part of his varied

culture which made him so interesting a companion. The reproach of deficiency in academical distinction, for a representative of the University, was sometimes, I think, unjustly cast on him. The position of Scholar at Trinity, and a high Second Class in the Classical Tripos, are honours by no means despised in the eyes of those who understand their meaning. At the same time his friends would have had a right to expect more from his great talents but for that devotion to politics, which was then, and ever after, for him the ruling passion."

CHAPTER III.

AFTER leaving Cambridge Mr. Raikes entered his name at the Middle Temple, and in the autumn of 1860 commenced his legal studies in the chambers of Mr. Bourdillon, a conveyancer of some repute, at 3, Stone Buildings.

Although he worked steadily, from the first the law had comparatively little interest for him, and he soon began to write for the press in his spare time. The first papers to avail themselves of his services were the *Morning Herald* and *Evening Standard*, and he also contributed occasionally to the *Yorkshire Post* and other leading provincial journals.

His natural tastes, together with the desire to obtain material for his articles, caused him to pay frequent visits to the House of Commons, and he was often indebted to the late Mr. Bass, M.P. for Derby, one of his kindest friends, for a pass.

In 1866 he became regularly attached to the *Standard* as a leader writer, and on March 1 thus announces the fact to his mother :—

“You may be glad to know that on that auspicious day to all of us, the 28th of February,* I commenced an engagement with the *Standard*, by which I am to write two articles

* His mother's birthday.

per week at two guineas apiece, which will give me nearly £200 a year if I keep pretty constant to London. My valuable contributions are to appear always on Thursday and Monday."

Mr. Raikes's introduction to the press was brought about by a short article upon some point of colonial politics (I think), which was printed, not in leader form, but as a letter. I am not sure which of the papers it appeared in, but it encouraged him to interview the editor, and paved the way for future articles.

His connection with the *Imperial Review* and other publications will be described later on; but before taking up the thread of his life again in 1861, it may be of interest to quote an extract from an article in the *Whitehall Review*, August, 1891, evidently written by some one acquainted with his literary efforts.

"Had he (Mr. Raikes) possessed less ambition and means, he would probably have been a successful journalist, for he was an excellent leader writer, and his contributions to the *Standard* five and twenty years ago were models of style and polish, cogency of argument, and apt illustration."

Mr. Raikes when in London, wrote home with considerable regularity, and much of the social and political gossip which he transmitted to his parents, is of interest at the present time, while the letters themselves throw valuable sidelights upon his character and disposition.

In a letter of March 29, 1861, he gives an anecdote of the Prince of Wales, who was at that time up at Cambridge—

“Of the latter (the Prince) it is said that when dining the other day at John’s, by way of doing the civil thing he accosted the master with a ‘Dr. Bateson, do you hunt?’ Poor Bateson was dumb-founded, on which the Prince, thinking to mend matters, remarked, ‘Oh, of course you did when an undergraduate!’”

The point of this story lies in the fact that the University authorities, then as now, looked with but scant favour upon devotion to the chase on the part of their *alumni*.

During this spring the health of Mr. Raikes’s father gave some grounds for alarm, and the bond of tender affection which existed between father and son is strikingly exemplified in a letter written by the latter on April 1, a portion of which I subjoin:—

“There are so many who cannot spare you, and most of all myself, that you must not allow such thoughts to distress you. When I look back upon all the happiness of my boyhood in your society, and your great kindness to me, and constant wish for my improvement, during those happy years when we rode and read together nearly the livelong day, I cannot but hope that the future has many such years of simple pleasure and usefulness in store for you with your younger sons, and even that I may, in some degree, recompense your care of my youth by doing something worthy of it. Yet, to me half the pleasure of any success will be wanting, if I have not the same kind eyes to sympathize with it that used to smile upon my first childish essays.”

On May 10 he urged his father to contest Flint county, then vacant by the death of Mr. T. E. M. Lloyd Mostyn, and pointed out that, owing to a variety of circumstances, an opportunity was afforded which might never come again. He adds—

“Ah, what would I not give for such a chance myself! . . . Meanwhile let me send a hint to the *Standard* that you are a possible candidate. I know the editor a little, and he will let me write an article to back you.”

His father did not come forward, and Mr. Raikes had to content himself by venting his superfluous energies in hunting up such Flintshire electors as resided in London in support of Mr. Hughes, the Conservative candidate.

On the 27th of the same month he thus described his first glimpse of Disraeli at close quarters.

“While we were comparing notes in a snug corner of the drawing-room at the Carlton, up to our table sauntered Disraeli himself, in beautiful condition and very smart in his get-up. I did so long to be introduced to him. I managed to pass to him through Lord Nevill a story B—— sent me this morning about eight voters at Hope, whom the R——’s have discovered to have been tampered with by Gladstone himself; on which Dizzy smiled the grimmest of smiles.”

The Liberal candidate triumphed in Flintshire, much to Mr. Raikes’s disappointment, and on May 31 he wrote in terms of lofty indignation that Mr. Gladstone “had the inconceivable bad taste and impudence to refer to the Flintshire election amid ‘loud derisive cheers’ from the Opposition. He has really quite resuscitated the old feelings of party warfare by making every political opponent a personal enemy.”

On June 15 he records a curious instance of the firm line adopted by Mr. Disraeli in questions

of party discipline. Twenty-four independent Conservatives absented themselves from a critical division, and in consequence Mr. Disraeli withdrew himself from the House altogether for three or four days, and declined to return until he had received a satisfactory apology from the malcontents.

On June 25 Mr. Raikes wrote from Newberries, where he was staying with his friend Arthur Bass—

“You will see that Bethell is the favourite to-day for the vacant Woolsack. Cockburn was yesterday. Poor old Lord Campbell! If, as one may hope, his mind was prepared, it seems a glorious death to die so painlessly and quietly after a life of eighty years, in the full enjoyment of his faculties, and still busied with his duties and society.”

On the 27th, two days later, in a letter full of legal gossip he records that “Bethell was sworn in Lord Chancellor this morning. His title is to be Lord Westbury.”

As has been already mentioned, Mr. Raikes married early in life. His bride was Miss Charlotte Blanche Trevor Roper, fourth daughter of the late Charles Blayney Trevor Roper of Plastêg, Flintshire, a country gentleman of old family, and a near neighbour. The wedding took place, amid considerable local rejoicings, at Hope Church, on September 26, 1861, and after the honeymoon, spent amid the picturesque scenery of South Devon, Mr. and Mrs. Raikes returned to London, and took up their abode in a modest cottage in the St. John's Wood district.

About the same time Mr. Raikes, having acquired the rudiments of conveyancing, turned his attention

to special pleading under the direction of Mr. T. Greening, at 5, Hare Court, Temple.

For the next few weeks his letters are devoted mainly to private affairs, but on November 29 he expresses himself strongly upon the "Trent" incident—

"They say here that Palmerston is resolved not to go to war about the Trent outrage. The French view us with unutterable scorn accordingly. I never heard of such a thing. An American war would really be a thing to volunteer for. So much for a 'spirited Foreign Policy!'"

The Government's determined attitude, however, speedily caused him to modify his tone, and on December 9 he wrote—

"How excited Frank (his sailor brother) will be by the American news! I wrote him a letter on Sunday, the 1st, giving the best account I could of the reception of the news in London. They sing patriotic songs now at several of the theatres, and the audiences rise cheering. It seems a very sad thing, though, and I fear history will overlook our provocation, and condemn us for attacking them when in such distress."

The earlier part of 1862 appears to have passed without any particular incident, and on February 12 Mr. Raikes writes—

"There seems a promise of utter stagnation in the Parliamentary Session. I suppose Gladstone will, however, do something to endanger the safety of a Ministry which, as the *Saturday* says, counterbalances the advantage of having Mr. Disraeli as an opponent by the misfortune of having Mr. Bright as a supporter."

On March 26, after alluding to a visit to the House

of Commons, he concludes a letter to his mother as follows :—

“The Classical Tripos is out to-day. Jebb first, and Graves second. Both things most gratifying to me, as Jebb is a personal friend, and a man of great genius, and Graves does credit to old Shrewsbury. Seventeen in the First Class again! What a swindle my year was with only eleven! At least, so thinks one who was fifteenth.”

In a letter dated May 2 he makes passing reference to the opening of the great Exhibition—

“The opening of the new Exhibition yesterday was, as you will have seen, a most splendid success. The weather is really such as I can hardly ever recollect, and even in London we seem to breathe Shelley’s ‘Elysian air.’ By the way, how the poets seem to have rivalled each other in bad verses on the occasion of the opening ceremony. I thought Tennyson’s lines the worst possible on the subject until I read Dean Trench’s.”

On June 9 Mr. Raikes announced that he had passed his Bar examination, and that—

“there are now, thank goodness, no further conditions precedent to my becoming a barrister, save the not unimportant ones of three dinners and the fees.”

Writing from Aberystwith on August 20, he dealt with the Roupell case, and sarcastically sums up his observations with the remark that Roupell—

“must be a Frankenstein equally composed of Gammon and Titmouse (he is not twenty-seven yet), and that is, I suppose, the natural type of a metropolitan M.P.”

It must be borne in mind that at the time this letter was written the Liberals had practically a monopoly of the London seats.

During the Long Vacation, on September 29, Mr. Raikes's eldest daughter, Alice Theodora, was born at Llwynegrin, and his return to London was in consequence deferred until the first week in November.

Writing to announce the safe arrival of his party, he expressed himself with some force upon the appointment of Dr. Thomson to the Archbishopric of York—

“The son of a Whitehaven grocer, a Third Class in Classics, and only forty-three! I do not suppose history contains a parallel. He is, I believe, a good man, and very good preacher, but he might have waited for two more Archbishops to have filled the See, and yet not have exceeded the usual age.”

In a subsequent letter he repeats an amusing anecdote on the subject of the reception of the news of her husband's elevation by Mrs. Thomson—

“Jasper More told me a good story yesterday. It appears that about the time Longley was designated for Canterbury, Mrs. Thomson (of Gloucester and Bristol) was confined. Her husband was also unwell about the same time, and kept his room—of course, a separate one from his wife's. One morning she was not a little alarmed by a vision of her spouse, who entered the room in his shirt, and with rather an excited manner, exclaiming, ‘Zoe, my love, I'm Archbishop of York.’ ‘Dear me, Willy dear,’ she is reported to have answered, ‘how very shocking! How ill you are—quite delirious! Do go back to bed and send for the doctor!’ The poor lady was terrified out of her wits, and could with difficulty be convinced by Lord Palmerston's letter, handed to her by the *sans-culotte* Archprelate.”

During the winter of 1862 there was a severe outbreak of the form of crime known as “garotting,”

and writing to his father on December 16, Mr. Raikes remarks—

“ I don't suppose you saw a little thing of mine in last week's *Punch*—a parody on Bonnie Dundee, about Bramwell's sentences on the garotters. It had not any very great merit, I am free to confess.”

Three verses * may be here reproduced :—

“ In the Court of Old Bailey 'twas Bramwell that spoke :
 ‘ The Crown can't allow all these crowns to be broke,
 So let each skulking thief who funks justice and me
 Just attend to the warning of bold Baron B.
 Just hand me my notes and some ink for my pen,
 And, gaoler, look sharp and bring up all your men,
 Under five years of servitude none shall go free,
 For it's up with the dander of bold Baron B.’

* * * * *
 “ He turned as he spoke to the hands of the clock,
 And then, with a scowl on the roughs in the dock,
 ‘ The time's getting on, but I've words two or three
 For your friends out of doors from your friend Baron B.
 Just hand me my notes, etc.

“ If one man dogs another as homeward he goes,
 And masters his purse by the aid of some blows,
 That man before long shall have audience of me,
 And I'll do my best for him,' quoth bold Baron B.
 He has got at his notes and some ink in his pen,
 Mr. Jonas before him has ranged all his men,
 ‘ For life, ten years, five ; none with less shall go free.’
 More strength to your elbow say we, Baron B.”

It was the only one of Mr. Raikes's occasional contributions to *Punch* which was ever accepted ; and in after years I have heard him say that he imagined that it owed its success to the fact that he sent it in unsigned, and with nothing to ear-mark it. Several

* “ Poems and Occasional Pieces,” by Henry Cecil Raikes. Richard Bentley & Son, 1895.

other pieces, of greater merit in his opinion, which had his name attached to them, were entirely ignored.

These verses were popularly attributed to Tom Taylor, and the late Lord Bramwell had a copy of them, which he was known to show his friends with much delight.

On the last day of the year Mr. Raikes wrote—

“You will have seen all about the French Emperor’s visit to Rothschild, but I dare say this story has not reached you. It appears that a magnificent parrot had been instructed for a month previously in one particular formula. This unlucky bird was let loose in the afternoon while the battue was going on, and was ill-starred enough to cross the Emperor’s range. He fired, and the loyal parrot uttered its death-shriek in the words ‘*Vive L’Empereur.*’

“It is said that Napoleon III. was very much affected by this touching piece of devotion, and has ordered his victim to be stuffed for the Paris Museum. *Credat Judæus*, though I dare say old Rothschild is not very quick to believe in the anecdote which has sprung into existence on his own ground.”

In addition to his newspaper work, at this time he devoted some attention to a novel, of which he completed fifteen chapters. He used sometimes in later years to talk of finishing it, but never did so. The influence of Disraeli’s style is very apparent in this, his only essay in the art of fiction with the exception of an *entravaganza*, which latter he completed in February, 1863, and submitted to Buckstone.

The latter acknowledged its receipt in the following letter, which probably crushed Mr. Raikes’s theatrical aspirations, for I do not think that he sent the play to any other manager.

"T. R. H., March 7, 1863.

"DEAR SIR,

"As my Easter and next Christmas extravaganzas are settled upon, it would be useless my reading the MS. you so kindly offer me. I thought it better to say so at once than keep you in suspense. I have been too busy lately to reply to your note.

"Dear Sir, truly yours,

"JNO. B. BUCKSTONE."

CHAPTER IV.

IN February, 1863, Mr. Raikes, having concluded his legal studies, took chambers on his own account with Mr. Purton, an old school-friend, at 5, Mitre-court Chambers, although he was not formally called to the Bar till May 1.

He had more than once hinted his desire to embark upon a Parliamentary career to his father, who, it seems, had, at any rate for the time, entirely discountenanced the notion. His father-in-law, Mr. Trevor Roper, held different views, however, and, fortified by his approval, Mr. Raikes, on May 15, openly avowed his wish to contest the Flint Boroughs at the next election.

“I have, as you well know,” he wrote to his father, “only too strong a predilection for such an enterprise, and accordingly suffered him (Mr. Roper) at last to persuade me to see Lord Nevill, who is guardian to the young Mostyns, on the subject. . . . He introduced me to Mr. Spofforth, who is now the Carlton Coppock, and I had a long talk with him the other day at his office.”

Although his father still remained obdurate, he returned to the charge with great vigour some days later, and had evidently quite convinced himself that there was a fair possibility of success. His eagerness

is apparent in every line of his letter, although he made a gallant effort to deal with the subject in a dispassionate manner.

A sudden attack of illness which compelled him to go to the seaside to recuperate, caused the project to drop into abeyance for awhile, and later, the increasing gravity of his father's symptoms diverted the current of his thoughts, and prevented him from intruding his own personal wishes and ambitions upon his distressed parents.

He joined the North Wales Circuit, on July 21, at Carnarvon ; and not long afterwards his father's illness took a still more serious turn, and ended in his death in the first week of October.

This sad event naturally upset all Mr. Raikes's plans, and for the remainder of the year he had little time to spare for his own concerns, in consequence of the volume of business cast upon him. In November he returned to London, and on the 23rd of the following month his eldest son, Henry St. John Digby, was born.

In the spring of 1864, Mr. Raikes gratified a long-cherished desire, by making a prolonged tour in Italy, and spent some months in Rome. Writing thence to his mother, on March 31, he says—

“At every turn there is something to see, most interesting or beautiful, or both ; and the soft warm weather and cloudless sky contributed to make us fancy ourselves almost in Paradise. It is endless to particularize, but I think the Coliseum by moonlight was the most enchanting scene I have ever beheld.”

Modern Rome naturally created a less favourable impression.

“I do not admire any of their boasted palaces much, and think their churches mean outside, and tawdry and unimpressive within. The Vatican is admitted to be frightful, but St. Peter’s even, is only impressive to me from its great size. The front is, to my mind (I speak as a fool), singularly unsatisfactory, very like the Mansion House, but much inferior. The colonnades are certainly beautiful, and the dome would be grand upon almost any other structure, but I cannot swallow the façade. . . . I have said nothing, but it is because nothing adequate can be said, of the beauty of the art-collections of pictures and statues. The eye is quite surfeited by the lavish beauty of form and colour which it has enjoyed. If the antiquities did not make Rome the most interesting place in the world, the art-treasures would.”

It was, however, reserved for Venice to arouse in him as in many others, the highest feelings of enthusiasm and admiration.

“*Venice, April 24.*—The place is quite indescribable. Of all the foreign cities, it alone has quite exceeded my highest preconceived ideal. The Piazza of St. Mark is not only the most interesting site of modern Europe, but by far the most beautiful group of buildings I have ever seen, or dreamt of. And so totally unlike anything else, one can hardly believe in its existence even when there.

“In pictures there is a more lavish display than anywhere else, and in the great gallery the Assumption of Titian is to my mind the *ne plus ultra* of beauty. Raphael’s Transfiguration at Rome may be classed with it, but to my mind the Titian is decidedly number one. It is quite worth coming to Italy to see this alone.

“As I write I look across the hotel garden, and see the lights glistening in the Grand Canal within a stone’s throw,

and rejoice that the world has one spot more romantic than all its romances."

The Italian lakes, too, appealed forcibly to Mr. Raikes's sense of beauty, and some idea of the impression they made upon him, may be culled from the following passage :—

"*May 8.*—But the lakes, especially Como, and inferior only to it, Lugano and Maggiore, transcend in perfect and varied loveliness anything I could have fancied in earth or heaven. They differ in character, but only to rival each other in beauty. Lugano's waters are darker, its banks greener, and the hills about it not quite so lofty as those encircling its grander neighbours ; but I hardly know whether it is not my favourite of the three, though nothing ought to be mentioned in the same week with beautiful Bellagio."

On his return to London, Mr. Raikes, who in consequence of his father's death had become the possessor of a fair independence, removed his household from Regent's Park to 33, Gloucester Place, Hyde Park, and at once began to look out for a seat in Parliament.

For some months his efforts failed to meet with success, although, by Mr. Spofforth's advice, his name was submitted to the Stockport people, and negotiations were also entered into with some members of the party at Malmesbury; and it was not until the following year that he was selected to contest Chester in the Conservative interest, upon the retirement of Major Humberston.

His small Flintshire property was situated but a few miles from the ancient city, and, had circumstances

permitted it, he would dearly have loved to take up his abode there. But, reluctant though he was to sever old associations, he realized that his work lay in the metropolis, and decided to make London his headquarters until such time as he should be able to afford two establishments.

CHAPTER V.

IN the memoir written by Dr. E. C. Clark, an extract from which has been given in a previous chapter, the author asserts that Mr. Raikes "only entered on the real work of his life when he began his electioneering campaigns in 1865."

This is undoubtedly true. Mr. Raikes did little more than approach the threshold of literature and law. His talents would probably have raised him to eminence in either profession had he chosen to persevere, but his inclinations always led him in a different direction, and, when the opportunity of gratifying them came, he readily bade adieu to any chance of literary or legal distinction, and devoted himself to what, from that time onward, was the real work of his life. He retained his chambers for a few years, and practised occasionally; while he continued to write, and to take an interest in literary matters throughout his career. But, the plunge once made, law and letters alike became mere incidents in his scheme of existence. Both by nature and training, he was well fitted for public life; and in spite of the crushing defeat which he suffered in his first contest at Chester,

the brilliancy of his early speeches, and the skill and coolness with which he parried the assaults of Mr. Gladstone himself, marked him out as a man likely to go far.

The sitting members for Chester at the time of the General Election, 1865, were Earl Grosvenor (the present Duke of Westminster) and the late Colonel Humberston. The latter, who was a Conservative, did not propose to offer himself for re-election, and a vacancy was thus created, which was eventually contended for by three candidates. Earl Grosvenor's seat did not enter into the calculations of any of the aspirants, for his family interest was of such a preponderating nature that his return was a practical certainty.

The position generally was rather a curious one. Numerically, the Liberals in Chester were in a large majority, but at the previous election a considerable section of them had co-operated with the Conservatives in returning Colonel Humberston, who was exceedingly popular with all classes.

The choice of the Conservatives lay between Lord Binning and Mr. Raikes, and in April they decided in the latter's favour. A section of the Liberals had meanwhile determined to bring forward Mr. Fenton, a selection which was not agreeable to many influential members of the party, who, in turn, proceeded to cast about for a candidate of their own.

To Mr. Raikes the condition of affairs was intensely interesting. If the Liberal opponents of Mr. Fenton

were unable to bring forward a man of their own, they were likely to support the Conservative, and in sufficient numbers to secure him the seat.

If, on the other hand, they did succeed in finding a candidate, it was just possible that, in spite of the great Liberal preponderance, Mr. Raikes might be enabled to defeat both their representatives. Mr. W. H. Gladstone's name soon began to be mentioned as a probable candidate, and before issuing his address, Mr. Raikes wrote to Sir Stephen Glynne, who was an old friend of the family, to ascertain whether his nephew really proposed coming forward.

Sir Stephen in his reply, dated May 16, informed him that such was likely to be the case, and added—

“I very much regret that you should thus be placed in opposition to my nephew, as of course it is annoying to see those in whom one takes an interest engaging in the turmoil of an election on different sides. But though Willy Gladstone has in some measure been drawn into election matters at Chester, he has not yet finally consented to be a candidate, and I cannot say whether he will ultimately be in the field or not. I have never ceased to regret that he has been put forward at all, and I shall only be too glad if it is decided to withdraw him.”

These views were not, however, shared by Mr. W. E. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, who not only urged his son's claims with all his usual impetuosity, but actually, in defiance of the etiquette which at that time forbade a Cabinet Minister to take part in another candidate's election, came to Chester and joined actively in the fray. In view of the

relationship subsisting between the parties, this proceeding, though irregular, was not entirely unnatural, but, of course, it placed Mr. Raikes at a considerable disadvantage, and he strongly resented it. In one way, nevertheless, it was beneficial to him, for it placed in his hand a weapon of which he made adroit and effective use.

Mr. Gladstone opened the campaign with an unprovoked onslaught upon his youthful opponent, and derided his utterances in a manner that was, perhaps, hardly generous in a man of his standing. Doubtless, he was animated only by the desire to forward his son's interests, but his contemptuous words indubitably left a sting behind which was never entirely eradicated. As a sample of the style of rhetoric in which he indulged, I will quote one passage from the speech he delivered at Mr. W. H. Gladstone's first meeting, and Mr. Raikes's reply thereto:—

“I have read Mr. Raikes's speeches. I think he seems to be a young gentleman of considerable readiness, and he has got cut-and-dried opinions on all the questions of the day. . . . You may get a cut-and-dried representative who will answer political questions as if they were his catechism, and will go like a parrot wherever you send him; but, gentlemen, if at 24 or 25, as Mr. Raikes seems to think, he ought to understand the whole wide range of English politics, and be a perfect master of all these vast subjects, and, not only a master, but in a condition to smite every other man with denunciation, I say this, that if he can get to that by the age of 25, what a wonderful fellow he will be by the time he is 50 or 60. And I really do think that, if Mr. Raikes's education advances in future years at such a rate as he

appears to think it has advanced of late, I will not tell to what enormous dimensions—I mean morally—he may not swell in future times.”

Although Mr. Raikes was somewhat surprised at this personal attack, from a quarter from which, in view of the degree of intimacy which had existed between the two families, it was totally unexpected, he picked up the glove with alacrity, and promptly carried the war into the enemy's country. The carefully studied moderation of the greater part of his reply made it very effective, and, as he doubtless hoped, it resulted in a display of considerable irritation on the minister's part. The portion I propose to quote runs—

“Now, gentlemen, I come to another subject, which I approach with great reluctance, and with which I wish to deal with the greatest moderation. I refer, of course, to that remarkable fact, the unprecedented appearance amongst you, as an electioneering speaker, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Gentlemen, I respect the Chancellor of the Exchequer's eminent position ; I admire his splendid abilities ; I believe that he believes he is always, and in all things, actuated by public spirit, and I am further retarded in expressing my full feelings on this occasion by the memory of one who was my father *and his friend*. But let it not be for a moment supposed that I stand here in Chester to be intimidated by the imported eloquence of any alien orator. I could not any longer look upon myself as a gentleman or an Englishman, I should feel ashamed of myself, I should feel it a disgrace for Chester, if I allowed myself to be deterred from my duty, or driven from my post, by the openly expressed displeasure of even so great a Minister. Some of my friends have been comparing me with an

ancient soldier, who had the temerity to defy the lightning. Gentlemen, the thunderbolt has fallen, and I am not much the worse for it.

“As to the good taste of the right hon. gentleman’s appearance amongst you, I will not make any remark. I will leave it to the calm judgment of friend or foe amongst the citizens of Chester. As to the political propriety of a Cabinet Minister interfering in such a measure, I am happy to quote, not my own words, but those of a member of her Majesty’s present Government. You are aware that an election is now proceeding in Westminster. The friends of one of the candidates had the folly and absurdity to invite the assistance and co-operation of a Cabinet Minister, and from that gentleman received the dignified rebuke that a Cabinet Minister, though he might sympathize with the political opinions of a candidate, felt it his duty, as a member of her Majesty’s Government, not to interfere beyond giving his vote at the election. Gentlemen, that letter was written under the instructions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and there appeared at the foot the signature ‘W. E. Gladstone.’

“I think it would have been better for his own fame, if, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was tempted down to Chester, he had acted in the same way. I say, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down to Chester, it was a pity that he had not the help of that judicious private secretary—but he was too busy electioneering on his own account. And then, you know, the election of Mr. W. H. Gladstone is a matter of so much more national importance than the election of Mr. Stuart Mill. As to the dignity of the proceeding . . . I will say nothing.”

After dealing seriatim with the main points of Mr. Gladstone’s speech, Mr. Raikes concluded as follows :—

“The names of great men are associated with their

labours. The name of Wilberforce will live as long as the history of England's self-denial in the emancipation of the slaves; the name of Pitt will be for ever associated with the great struggle for the liberty of England and Europe; my own humble family name may, I trust, go down connected with the education of the poor;* and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has elected to let his name go down to posterity with the Gladstone † claret."

On reading this speech, Mr. Gladstone is reported to have said, "*That* is the most impudent young man in England."

Nor was he content with this expression of opinion alone, as we see by a letter written by Mr. Raikes to his mother on June 2, in which he says—

"The violent attack made upon me by the Chancellor of the Exchequer appears to have created a great impression in my favour. He is quite furious; has written to me demanding an explanation of some things I have said, and threatens Mr. G. Boydell with all sorts of terrors if he does not retract some things which he has said. So we are in the heat of the battle."

The correspondence has not been preserved, with the exception of a copy of the last letter written by Mr. Raikes, which is couched in the most polite and good-tempered terms.

Writing of Mr. W. H. Gladstone, he remarked that he was "fairly civil," but a more extended

* An allusion to Robert Raikes, the founder of Sunday-schools.

† A reference to the diminution of the dues upon imported light wines—Mr. Gladstone's scheme for encouraging their consumption among the poorer classes in preference to beer, and thus promoting sobriety.

acquaintance inspired a true and almost tender liking for him. The latter's naturally gentle disposition unfitted him to some extent for the turmoil of political life, but in compensation gained him a host of personal friends. At his death he may be said to have left not a single enemy behind, and few men have been more sincerely mourned than "Willy" Gladstone.

The election resulted in the return of Earl Grosvenor and Mr. W. H. Gladstone; Mr. Raikes, in spite of his exertions, being at the bottom of the poll. His want of success is not very surprising, if we take into consideration that Lord Grosvenor's supporters, although free to give their second votes as they pleased, not unnaturally preferred to bestow them upon the candidate whom they supposed to be most nearly in accord, politically, with the House of Eaton. Mr. Fenton had a strong following of his own, but the appearance upon the scene of a member of Mr. Gladstone's family proved fatal to his prospects, as it did to those of Mr. Raikes.

The latter's spirited encounter with the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, however, done him the service of marking him out as a rising man, and he was generally spoken of in the Press as one for whom a seat must shortly be found.

He had not very long to wait, for towards the close of April, 1866, while the fate of Mr. Gladstone's Reform Bill still hung in the balance, he was invited, in conjunction with the Hon. R. C. Abbot (now Lord Colchester), to contest one of the two seats at

Devonport, which had become vacant in consequence of an election petition.

Mr. Raikes himself nourished high hopes, and ably backed by Mr. Ferrand, one of the former members, he and Mr. Abbot very nearly succeeded in gaining the victory, and would probably have made an even better fight than they did, but for the mismanagement of one of their agents. They held the lead up to 1.30 on the polling day, but from that time their opponents drew slowly away, and in the event were successful by fifty-three votes.

In spite of these two defeats, Mr. Raikes's aptitude for political life had already been recognized by Mr. Disraeli, and other members of the Constitutional party, to whose service he regularly attached himself in the course of the summer, and undertook, at the instance of Lord Nevill (Lord Abergavenny), the organization and development of those first Conservative associations, upon which the popular Conservatism of the present day has been founded. And it was, probably, in consequence of the intimate terms thereby established between Mr. Raikes and the more active and popular leaders of the party, that, although he had not yet had a seat in Parliament, and was still under thirty years of age, he was pressed to become a candidate at the next election, not only for Devonport for the second time, but also for the important Lancashire constituencies of Salford and Manchester.

That Mr. Raikes had made a considerable impression on Lord Nevill thus early in their acquaintance

(1866), is indicated in a letter written by Dr. Smythe of Lewes, in the course of this year :—

“ I saw Lord Nevill to-day, and mentioned to him that in expressing my own wish that you should represent the town of Lewes in the House of Commons, I was only giving utterance to the feelings of a large majority in the Boro'. . . . Lord Nevill said you were a man of remarkable genius, a splendid speaker, and that you would some day be *leader* in the Commons House. I was very glad to hear this come from the President of our Association. Of my own opinion of you—I hope to give it *pro bono publico* on the hustings.”

Mr. Raikes's connection with Lewes was due, in the first instance, to his mother having taken a house in the neighbourhood, which enabled him to cultivate friendly relations with the local leaders of the party. Some lectures which he delivered, aroused a good deal of interest, and he soon became personally popular. As he had the additional advantage of being favourably looked upon by Lord Nevill, he would certainly have been asked to come forward at the next election, had not the action of the Reform Bill deprived the town of one of its members.

CHAPTER VI.

ALTHOUGH, as pointed out in the last chapter, Mr. Raikes practically broke away from his old routine when he made his plunge into active politics, he did not lose touch with his literary work. And though he gave up actually writing for the Press shortly after his entry into Parliament, he, nevertheless, indulged in literary ventures to some extent, and to the last was an occasional contributor to such magazines as the *Fortnightly*, the *Nineteenth Century*, and the *National Review*.

In a letter to an old college friend, the Rev. Edward Evans, dated February 27, 1865, he says—

“My own political prospects are not very bright, but I am going to be connected with a new Conservative paper on really sound principles, which will not, I fear, find much favour with the public. The scheme, however, is not yet far advanced, but we are to endeavour to enunciate the real principles of an aristocratic party and government, not mere Derbyism, and we have got one or two good men.”

He probably was referring here in anticipation to the ill-fated *Imperial Review*, which he brought out in 1867, in conjunction with Mr. Luckie (afterwards the owner of *John Bull*), who, besides being part proprietor, undertook the duties of editor. The paper,

although patronized to some extent by the party, and supported by some of the cleverest writers of the day, failed to gain much hold upon the affections of the public—as Mr. Raikes had only too truly prophesied in his letter two years before—and in August, 1867, the editor wrote grimly to say, “We shall soon be in a position to advertise the most aristocratic circulation in the world.” It began to improve its financial position in 1868, but remained a source of such expense to its proprietors, that in October they made up their minds to discontinue it. This determination was, however, modified at the earnest request of Mr. Spofforth, who promised to apply to the heads of the party for a sufficient sum of money to tide the paper over the General Election, which took place in November. I am not aware whether the application was successful or not, but the *Review* was carried on until December, when it came to an end, and terminated Mr. Raikes’s solitary venture as a newspaper proprietor—a somewhat costly experience. A final effort was made, it appears, to save it from destruction, but the Conservatives were at the time partially paralyzed by the magnitude of their defeat; and Mr. Disraeli’s *dictum* that the party was “over-papered,” was the stereotyped reply to every suggestion.

Although, by 1866, his pursuit of the law had become very fitful, he still continued to go circuit, in consequence of his having been appointed “junior.” In this capacity he once had the privilege of reading a severe lecture to a gentleman who is now an

ornament of the Bench, but his duties were not, as a rule, heavier than his practice, which, he mentions in April, 1866, had produced eight guineas as the result of the circuit. A chance, had he cared to grasp it, was, however, afforded him a few months later, shortly after the Devonport contest, when he received his first and only Parliamentary brief. Owing to the absence of his leader, the duty of replying fell to Mr. Raikes, who thus took a more prominent part in the proceedings than generally falls to the lot of a barrister of three years' standing, and little experience, in a matter of such importance. He not only won his case, but did sufficiently well to merit the approbation of his opponent, Serjeant Merewether; but his good fortune did not cause him to falter for a moment in pursuing his chosen career. A success of this sort he looked upon as merely accessory to it.

In July Mr. Raikes formulated the idea of acquiring the *Globe* in the interests of the Conservative party, but, at any rate at first, the authorities declined to undertake the responsibility, or to subscribe, although Mr. Spofforth wrote that, "the possession of the *Globe* newspaper by the Conservative party, if unknown to the public, would be of material advantage." It seems, however, that some arrangement was eventually arrived at, direct or indirect, for on November 6 Mr. Raikes wrote to his mother: "Do you ever see the new *Globe** which I bought for the party? It is the best paper going."

* It is now, and has been for many years, in private hands.

In 1867 he succeeded Mr. J. M. Clabon, as Chairman of the Committee of the Church Defence Institution, founded some years previously by the late Mr. Henry Hoare, to constitute a centre to direct and advise Churchmen throughout the country upon the subjects relating to the temporal interests of the Church.

The society, guided, as it had up to that time been, by laymen rather of the clerical type, had failed to make much impression upon public opinion, and it was reserved for Mr. Raikes—seconded most ably by the late Dr. Alfred Lee, whose services he secured as secretary to the Institution immediately after the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland had become an accomplished fact—virtually to create and develop that powerful organization, which, while carefully avoiding all topics of religious controversy, has during the last thirty years so successfully maintained the position of the National Church against all assaults.

But, important as was the work on behalf of the Church which Mr. Raikes then took in hand, and great as was the influence which it exerted upon the whole of his after life, it was in a sense subordinate, in 1867-68, to his labours in connection with the organization of the Conservative party. Their results in many respects represented the best work ever done by him, from a political point of view. The passage of years has not unnaturally dulled the recollection of some of those now remaining of the men who, at the time, were in a position to appreciate his services ; while

a later generation has no knowledge of the ungrudging labour, which, if it bore no immediate fruit in the 1868 Election, when the organization was still in its infancy, has since then been largely instrumental in popularizing Conservative sentiments throughout the kingdom, especially in the industrial centres.

Roughly speaking, Lord Nevill had conceived the idea of bringing into line all the scattered Conservative and Constitutional Associations in the country, and he pitched upon Mr. Raikes as the best man to bring the scheme to a practical conclusion.

Attempts, some of them moderately successful, had been made in this direction from time to time, but the desired result had never been actually attained, and it fell to Mr. Raikes's lot to practically unite the more important Associations under one central council, thus securing unity of aims and policy amongst them.

He attacked the task with characteristic vigour, but, needless to say, the work was not completed in a day. The difficulties he had to contend with were immense, and, at times, it appeared as though ultimate success were impossible. This was in the main due to the jealousy of the existing large Associations. Some of them were anxious to maintain their independence; others were frankly indifferent; others, again, were almost openly hostile. Of these, perhaps, the most powerful was the Metropolitan Conservative Association, which, in addition to fulfilling the functions to be inferred from its title, had a large connection in the country, and probably hoped some day to rise to

a position of supreme authority. Its moving spirits, in consequence, regarded the new venture, in spite of its official character, with suspicion, and as likely to interfere with their operations and lessen their importance. Such was the position with which Mr. Raikes found himself confronted when he took the business in hand. As a basis for his operations he determined to utilize the machinery of the then existing Conservative Union, and amongst those who were prominently associated with him in this task, were the present Sir William Charley, a most impetuous worker, Mr. A. G. Marten, and Mr. W. C. Harvey.

To secure efficiency in this direction was, of course, only a portion of the work. To make the new body a real success, it was necessary to gain the support of Conservatives throughout the country, and this entailed much labour and travelling. Mr. Raikes saw the great importance of establishing cordial relations between his party and the industrial population, and devoted special attention to this object. It was not easy to make way at first, but he was much encouraged by the splendid success he met with, amongst other places, at Manchester, then a stronghold of Liberalism, although the Conservative Association there was at first hostile to the new scheme.

In describing this particular meeting, he remarks—

“It is a great thing for the party to have assembled some 2500 working-men in the heart of the enemy’s country. No wonder they are infuriated.”

By August, 1867, the scheme was well under way, and some idea of the value placed upon Mr. Raikes's services in connection with it, can be gathered from a letter he received from Mr. Spofforth, then the manager of the Conservative party, on the 12th of that month:—

“I am sure the Conservative party will never be out of your debt (unless, indeed, it falls to their lot to make you Lord Chancellor) for the continuous and unremitting exertions you have made for their benefit. What I wanted to have a personal conference with you for, will be explained by the enclosed correspondence. . . . Mr. — has every inclination but luckily not the ability to be mischievous, and his conduct is only another instance of how careful any one in my position ought to be, before in the slightest degree encouraging, or having communication with a zealous politician who has an eye rather to his own advantage than to that of the party. . . . I quite agree with you in the substance of your letter, and hope that we shall have Conservative Working-men's Associations established in every borough in England, those to be in communication with the Conservative Union. Can you tell me anything about Mr. Harvey and Mr. Charley, two young barristers, who appear to be zealous and respectable?”

The work of establishing local Conservative Associations affiliated to the Central Council, steadily progressed, and in November it was determined that the Conservative Union should cease to exist as such, and should be merged in the new body, which was formally launched as “The National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations.”

Mr. Gorst, now Sir John, was the first Chairman of

the Council, and Mr. Leonard Sedgewick, a *protégé* of Lord Nevill's, was appointed secretary.

In December, the National Union, as it is now commonly called, issued a circular, in which it was explained that the object for which it was founded was "to give unity of ideas and of action to the Constitutional Associations which are now being formed throughout the country."

Although the scheme was, on the whole, well received, opposition was by no means stifled, and for some years the organization had a hard fight for existence. It managed, however, to survive the disastrous result of the General Election in 1868, and by 1870 was recognized as a considerable factor in the political world. In that year Mr. Raikes, who had, in 1869, become a Vice-Chairman, was appointed Chairman of the Council, a position which he held until 1875. It was in 1870 that an idea, which had occurred to Mr. Raikes and some of his colleagues some time previously, took shape. The proposal, which was warmly supported by Lord Holmesdale, was to establish, under the auspices of the Union, a club founded upon constitutional lines, with a view to drawing the members of the party more closely together, and putting the members of the country associations in touch with their friends in London. The scheme was eventually carried out by the formation of the St. Stephen's Club.

In 1871 the National Union got into difficulties, which were not lessened by the fact that at the

beginning of the year Mr. Gorst had undertaken the direction of its most formidable rival, the Metropolitan Conservative Association, as secretary.

His immense capacity for organization was of the greatest value to that body, which began seriously to threaten the position and independence of the Union. I do not suppose that he was actuated by any real spirit of hostility to the latter, but that he was guided rather by the desire to bring into prominence the Association to which he had given his services, and to secure for it predominant influence, at the expense of a rival, if necessary. Be this as it may, the position soon became serious, and as an instance of the friction between the two bodies, the following extract from a letter written by him to Mr. Raikes on March 8, 1871, speaks for itself:—

“The difficulty is this: Sedgewick (the secretary of the N.U.) and I are both in correspondence with country associations and agents. We sometimes ask simultaneously for the same information, and we sometimes give answers on the same subjects not exactly in the same sense. This method of proceeding is not calculated to create confidence on the part of the country associations in the central organization of the party.”

This was undoubtedly true, but Mr. Raikes had not the slightest intention of allowing the Union to be reduced to impotence on that account. A scheme of re-organization was carried out under his direction, which resulted in establishing it upon a permanent basis, and the best testimony to the wisdom of the course

pursued is given by the position which the National Union holds at the present time.*

Busy though he was in 1867 with his work of organization, Mr. Raikes did not relinquish his efforts to find a seat in Parliament. In this he was very nearly successful on one occasion, to judge by a letter to his mother, written on January 31 :—

“The Boston affair has revived unexpectedly, and it is now settled that I am to be the candidate, and, as I hope, pretty nearly settled that I shall win.”

He goes on to say that he will not be able to deliver a projected lecture on Bolingbroke at Lewes in consequence, and adds—

“I have been grinding at my subject for some time, and am somewhat disgusted at not being able to deliver it. But I hope the Monday Club will forgive me, as I certainly shall myself if I tack the two magic letters to my name before I revisit Lewes.”

The project, however, fell through, and he resumed his ordinary duties for the time.

On May 4 he mentions that he has sold Tuffley, his Gloucestershire property, which had come into the family by the marriage of the beautiful Miss Mee, Lord Palmerston's aunt, to Richard Raikes, Canon of Gloucester in years gone by, and of which much of the proceeds were destined to be swallowed up in election contests subsequently. He adds—

* It is a significant fact that, whereas in 1868 London returned only one Conservative member, at the present time, 1897, fifty-four out of its sixty-two representatives belong to the Unionist party, a circumstance to which Mr. Balfour drew attention in a recent speech addressed to the Metropolitan Division of the National Union.

“This has been a busy week. I have been introduced to Disraeli, who spoke very kindly and complimentarily to me in the hearing of the deputation.”

Even thus early in his career Mr. Raikes had set the representation of Cambridge University before himself as one of the goals of his ambition; nor did he lack supporters, prominent among whom was his old schoolfellow, Mr. Arthur Holmes. The views of some of the older men, who were not unfavourably disposed to him personally, are well expressed in the following letter, written in November, 1867, by the Very Rev. Dr. Perowne, who, fifteen years later, in 1882, his second condition having been meanwhile amply fulfilled, was among Mr. Raikes's staunchest champions when he defeated Professor Stuart, and secured the Blue Riband of the House of Commons—

“There are,” he wrote, “two objections which would be urged against his (Mr. Raikes's) election—his comparative youth, and his want of a high Degree. One of these *will* be removed in the course of a few years; the other *may* be removed if Mr. Raikes will gain such public reputation as a speaker or writer, or in some other way obtain such a recognized position as will satisfy our fastidious Senate of his intellectual fitness to represent them.”

In January, 1868, it became known that Sir Roundell Palmer, one of the sitting members for the University, was on the point of giving up his seat, and Mr. Raikes, with a view to discovering how much support he could count on if he decided to come forward, paid a visit to Cambridge.

The late Mr. Beresford Hope was the nominee of the High Church party, while amongst the Moderates the names of Mr. Cleasby, Q.C., and the Hon. J. W. Strutt (now Lord Rayleigh) were mentioned. The last-named was, in the first instance, the candidate favoured by the Government, and as he had occupied the proud position of Senior Wrangler a year or two before, he was, in spite of his youth, looked upon kindly by the University itself. He failed, however, to give satisfactory assurances on certain points, and in consequence withdrew from the contest.

The honour of opposing Mr. Beresford Hope therefore rested between Mr. Cleasby and Mr. Raikes. The latter was warmly supported by letter by Mr. Spofforth, and on the spot by Mr. Arthur Holmes, Dr. E. C. Clark, and Dr. Perowne, who in the end waived his previous objections. These, however, still held good with the majority, and the choice eventually fell on Mr. Cleasby.

Mr. Raikes took his disappointment very well, and at once set to work on behalf of his quondam opponent. Writing to his mother on February 15, he says—

“I have been so immensely occupied in conducting old Cleasby’s election, that I have had but little leisure either to reflect on my disappointment, or to acknowledge the kindness which has been shown me in consequence. Yet it is rather hard, the same never-varying answer which I get from those to whom I write, ‘I should have been delighted to vote for you, but I cannot support Cleasby, and have gone over to B. Hope.’ Besides, it is very trying to the temper to sit for

hours in that Committee Room, really conducting the whole business of the election, yet without the authority requisite to reduce the disorder, and to organize a more satisfactory state of things. . . . I felt that I owed it to my friends at Cambridge, who had shown such kind consideration of my claims, that I should forward the wishes of the party to the best of my power. . . . It ought to lead to something hereafter, but at present politics seem rather weary work."

Mr. Raikes's exertions were probably telling upon him at the time, and this, combined with his failure to secure a satisfactory Parliamentary opening, tended to keep him in a state of depression. In his two next letters he took a very gloomy view of his position, and it was not until he decided, in August, to contest Chester for the second time that he recovered his normal spirits.

Writing on March 3, he said—

"I wish I could look forward to any promotion with my Chiefs. But, unhappily, great people are very slow to appreciate the importance we youngsters set upon our claims or capabilities. I have at present, certainly, powerful friends. But my experience is that powerful friends do rather less for one than for others. I have had a very friendly note from old Cleasby, to whom I have announced my intention of coming forward next time. I have to preside to-night at a large Conservative dinner at Brompton and Chelsea. It is a great bore. But I suppose it is well to experience every phase of public life."

On June 30, in his capacity of Chairman of the Church Defence Institution, he addressed a meeting of five thousand people in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, in opposition to Mr. Gladstone's proposal

to disestablish and disendow the Irish Church. The proceedings were marked with great enthusiasm, and the significance of the unanimous resolutions in favour of the maintenance of the Union of Church and State was accentuated by the fact that they were passed in a great Liberal centre. Mr. Raikes, himself, secured a considerable personal triumph, but neither this nor the receipt of requisitions from Manchester and Salford, asking him to stand in the Conservative interest at the next election, did much to raise his spirits. Although he appreciated the compliment paid him, he was anxious to contest a seat where there was a fair prospect of success. On July 10 he was informed that a petition, asking him to come forward again, was being largely signed in Chester, and on the 14th he wrote to his mother—

“I am as yet quite unable to foresee whether I shall be a candidate for Chester or some other place. . . . I will send you the *Liverpool Mail*, which has a magnificent flourish of trumpets over my Manchester speech.

“This last week has been a very harassing one, as well as very hot. I have had to decline positively (a thing I hate doing) two too affectionate constituencies. And it is quite possible that I may be left without a seat at all. Nor, to tell sober truth, should I very bitterly regret it if I am shut out again from Parliament.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE Chester requisition, which, as mentioned in the last chapter, was set on foot in July, 1868, reached such large proportions that, early in August, Mr. Raikes announced his readiness to contest the seat again, as it seemed to be the wish of nearly half the electorate that he should do so. He soon found that he had no reason to regret this decision, for the newly enfranchised working men, on whom he had made a very favourable impression in 1865, before they were entitled to vote, received him with open arms.

The general position was, as will be remembered, rather a curious one. Early in the year Mr. Gladstone had succeeded in defeating the Government on his motion in favour of disestablishing the Church in Ireland. It was, however, agreed upon all hands that an appeal to the constituencies would, under the circumstances, be absurd, since, as matters stood, no voice would be given to the enlarged electoral body under the Franchise Act, 1867. The General Election was, therefore, deferred until November, by which time arrangements had been made by Mr. Disraeli to enable the new voters to exercise their powers.

In the result, the country declared decidedly for

Mr. Gladstone and his policy, although, by the curious irony of fate, he personally was defeated in South Lancashire.

Chester was a striking exception to the general rule. Once more divided counsels held sway in the Liberal camp; and in consequence Mr. Salisbury, a local attorney, of Radical rather than Liberal tendencies, and Mr. Hoare, entered the lists against Mr. Raikes for the second seat. It was, as usual, assumed that, in spite of the introduction of an unknown quantity in the form of the new electors, Earl Grosvenor's return at the head of the poll was a certainty.

The election took place on November 17, and it early became apparent that Mr. Hoare had no chance of success. He consequently retired from the contest. An ever-widening gap separated Earl Grosvenor and Mr. Raikes from Mr. Salisbury, and all interest became centred on the struggle between the two leaders. Towards the close of the day some of Mr. Raikes's supporters grew frightened at the situation. The possibility of Earl Grosvenor occupying any place but the first had never occurred to their minds; and the position of their man, gratifying though it was, was also alarming, for the Grosvenor influence was a very real factor in the life of the citizens, and if "the Earl" were to be deprived of the place of pride, no man could tell what the consequences might be. A little judicious splitting of votes was therefore indulged in, in order to render the position quite secure, and, in the event, Earl Grosvenor headed the

poll by seventy-two votes, with Mr. Raikes second, nearly a thousand ahead of Mr. Salisbury.

Disappointment had so often been Mr. Raikes's portion that, during the preceding year, he had frequently stated that if he did not secure a seat in the House of Commons before he was thirty, he would retire from active political life. Too much weight need not be attached to this resolution, which was, no doubt, the outcome of depression of spirits, and I venture to think he was unlikely to have adhered to it, even in the face of further failure. At the same time, it is curious to note how narrow a margin separated his election from the fatal date. The former, as I have mentioned, took place on November 17, and just eight days later he celebrated his thirtieth birthday—on the 25th.

On November 20 he wrote to his mother—

“It is the best part of the success to find that it has gladdened so many kind hearts, and, as you say, the only tinge of regret about it is to think of one whom it would have gladdened most of all. . . . I am really more dead than alive after it all. I was chaired round the town for some three hours after it was all over, and nearly fainted three or four times, I was so knocked up, and I am still far from well.”

On December 2 Mr. Disraeli sent round a circular to his supporters, announcing the resignation of his ministry, who were, of course, in a hopeless minority.

Although their fate must have been merely a matter of time, the bolder policy of meeting Parliament had commended itself to Mr. Raikes, and he ventured to express his disappointment to Mr.

Spofforth. The latter's reply is interesting, if only to show how far those responsible for the guidance of the party misconceived the probable result of their course of action, although there is no particular reason to suppose that in any event affairs would have turned out very differently from the way they did.

"Thanks for your letter and what you have done.

"I disagree with you, and think the move was a good one. A debate on the Irish Church, which might have occurred had we continued in, would have enlightened Mr. Gladstone as to the likeliest measure to pass; as it is, he must introduce a crude and ill-digested measure, which will in all probability leave the Irish Establishment where it is. The move appears to have met with universal satisfaction. I have only heard of another dissident besides yourself, and you will see it will turn out all right."

It may be noted here that Mr. Raikes entered Parliament, to use his own expression, as "a constitutional reformer," *i.e.* a reformer within and upon the lines of the Constitution—a designation to which he always adhered in preference to the common party name of Conservative, as more aptly representing the true principles of popular Toryism.

Parliament met formally on December 10, but the real work of the Session did not begin until the House assembled in February, 1869.

Mr. Raikes soon gave evidence that he did not intend to earn the character of a silent member, and his maiden effort, a speech upon the redistribution of seats in Ireland, was favourably spoken of in the papers. Here is his own account of it contained in a letter to his mother, dated February 27 :—

“If I cannot, and certainly do not, call the thing a grand success, as some of my too flattering friends here are doing, it certainly cannot be called a failure—at least, I said what I had to say in the way in which I intended to say it, and was not for a moment nervous or confused. And that I succeeded in keeping the entire attention of the House for a full half-hour was, on the whole, more than I expected.”

In March, at the request of some Cambridge friends, he spoke against the University Tests Abolition Bill, and took this early opportunity of asserting his determination to act independently of his leaders if he chose. He thus alludes to the matter, in a letter written before his indignation had subsided :—

“We had a tremendous row in the House last night about the University Tests Bill, and our leaders behaved so badly that there is a very sore feeling among the independent members of the party. We had hoped to keep the Second Reading off till after Easter by incessant adjournments, but their pusillanimous policy led them to discountenance efforts which they ought to have made themselves. However, I think we have given them a lesson that we can speak for ourselves when we choose.”

All through his life Mr. Raikes was a strong advocate of a fighting policy when in opposition. He had, previously to his entrance to the House, consistently opposed Mr. Gladstone's proposals in respect to the Irish Church, on the platform, and in the Press, and had published a pamphlet on the subject; and when in this Session the Disestablishment Bill was introduced, he fairly revelled in the opportunities for attack which it offered. He took a constant part in the debates, and one of his speeches, couched in a

bantering vein, delivered on April 15, met with a very cordial reception, and drew commendation from Mr. Disraeli himself.

It was, however, inevitable that the Bill would pass the Commons, and in due course all eyes were turned to the Lords. They, too, bowed to the expressed will of the people, and the faint hopes which had still lingered in the hearts of the supporters of the Establishment in Ireland were finally extinguished. While matters were yet undecided, Mr. Ulick Bourke wrote to Mr. Raikes on June 23—

“I hope the Lords will be stout, as Cardinal Cullen has found the House of Commons so pliant that he will not easily let go his hold of Gladstone.”

He added in reference to the financial side of the measure—

“Gladstone’s generosity to us reminds me of Lord Coleraine, who, walking down Pall Mall in a very heavy shower, and receiving a salute from a fine lady, took off his friend’s hat and held it very low in return.”

Amongst minor matters, Mr. Raikes actively opposed the Burials Regulation Bill and Mr. Gurney’s Married Women’s Property Bill; and, generally speaking, took a prominent part in the work of the Session. At its close the *Globe* singled him out as one of the new members who had shown themselves to possess “considerable Parliamentary ability, either oratorical or practical,” coupling with his name those of Mr. Holt, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Broderick, and Lord G. Hamilton.

Less opportunity was afforded him in 1870, a great part of the Session being occupied by Mr. Forster's Education proposals, the scope and ultimate result of which were, perhaps, hardly realized at the time. He, however, took up the cudgels for medical officers serving on the west coast of Africa, who felt that they had a grievance under limitations introduced by the Warrant of 1867, and also interested himself on behalf of the transport officers.

A more ambitious effort was the introduction of a Married Women's Property Bill, in conjunction with Mr. Staveley Hill. Mr. Russell Gurney also reintroduced his Bill on the same subject, which had been thrown out by the Lords the year before.

The chief points of difference between the two measures are summarized in a circular issued by Mr. Raikes on April 25.

"Bill No. 1, introduced by Mr. Gurney and Mr. Jacob Bright, proposes to separate altogether the interests of husband and wife, to deprive the husband in every case of that authority which he has hitherto enjoyed as the sole controller of the family property; and by creating a separate estate for the wife to facilitate fraudulent transfers from the husband to her for the purpose of defrauding creditors.

"Bill No. 2, which is brought in by Mr. Raikes, Mr. Staveley Hill, and Mr. West, secures for a married woman's property in every case the security now only obtained by a settlement. It provides that in cases where a husband by misconduct or idleness has forfeited his right to authority over his family, a wife may obtain protection for property acquired or earned, after an order to that effect has been obtained, and it contains a stringent clause against marriage settlements made to defraud creditors."

On this occasion he did not oppose Mr. Gurney's proposals, but suggested that both Bills should be read a second time and referred to the same Select Committee. This the supporters of Bill No. 1 would not permit, and Mr. Raikes's measure was defeated on the Second Reading. Mr. Gurney's duly passed the House of Commons, and subsequently the House of Lords, after it had been subjected to considerable modification.

Although much occupied by his Parliamentary duties in 1869, Mr. Raikes found time to promulgate an elaborate scheme for extending Conservative influence in the country through the Press. Its main features were the establishment of a weekly paper to radiate simultaneously from four provincial centres, and the introduction of a new daily paper, under the direct auspices of the Conservative party, as a rival to the *Times*.

The idea was under consideration for some time, and as late as October, 1870, we have a letter from Mr. Rowland Winn in which he regretted that there was nothing doing as regards "the newspaper."

At the conclusion of the Session of 1869 Mr. Raikes took his family to Trouville, and not long after his return from abroad, attended the Church Congress at Liverpool, early in October, where he delivered an address upon Diocesan Organization.

A visit paid by him to Sir H. Drummond Wolff in December recalls to mind an anecdote of that

admirable *raconteur*, which the former was fond of repeating.

It happened that one evening, Sir Henry, Mr. Raikes, and another friend, were sitting at a card-table at one of their clubs, waiting for a fourth to make up the rubber, when a tall, dignified old gentleman, with white hair and an erect bearing, entered the room, and glanced round as though in search of some one. Sir Henry immediately addressed him cheerily with, "Ah! how are you, Sir John? Won't you join us?" The new-comer politely declined to do so, and smiling to himself, left the room. "Who is your friend?" inquired Mr. Raikes. "I'm sure I don't know," was the negligent reply. "I only hoped he would come in, and he *looked* just the sort of old buffer who would like to be called Sir John."

Another story which delighted him very much, had its birth many years later, after Sir Henry's return from Teheran, where he had been prostrated by a severe attack of illness. "Oh, yes," said the latter in reply to inquiries, "I was very bad indeed. In fact, they gave me up at one time; but the doctor managed to pull me through. Everybody was as kind as possible, and (with a twinkle in his eye) the Embassy sent a *very nice wreath*." The inflection of his voice, as he uttered the last three words, is said to have been quite indescribable. A very sincere bond of friendship united the two men, utterly dissimilar as they were in character, and they were close allies both in public and in private life.

In 1870 Mr. Raikes removed from Gloucester Place to 95, Onslow Square, where his second son, Francis Edward, was born; and it was here that he made the acquaintance of Mr. C. L. Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), who lived a few doors away. The latter, who was engaged at the time upon "Alice in Wonderland," used constantly to pace up and down the long garden at the back of the houses, on which his study windows opened, and soon made friends with the younger members of the family. The name Alice was ever a passport to his affections, and he and Mr. Raikes's eldest daughter, then a child of eight, struck up a firm alliance. I venture to append a charmingly characteristic letter written nearly twenty years later.

"Christ Church, Oxford, January 29, 1888.

"So it is not enough, my dear Raikes, that we should be, in a way, relations—nor even that I should have known you and your family for at least a dozen years, to justify you in asking for a bed here, but you feel it necessary to invoke the aid of my brother, to act as ambassador between us! Well, I will not be jealous of Wilfrid, *provided* you have known him longer and more intimately than me. Otherwise what stronger claim, to any hospitality I have to offer, *can* you desire, than the fact that you are the father of my old, old friend (not old in years, but old in friendship) Alice?"

"A bedroom shall be ready for you if you will kindly give me a day's notice. . . . Kindest regards to Mrs. Raikes, and love to your daughters—specially to Alice. Of course (owing to circumstances) I love *all* 'Alices,' more or less: but some more."

The outbreak of war between France and Prussia, in July, had a deep personal interest for Mr. Raikes,

as his mother was on the Continent at the time. Fortunately, she was in Switzerland at the moment when hostilities commenced, and her son advised her to remain there until the first rush was over. In the letter, in which he gave this counsel, written on July 21, he declared himself on the side of France :—

“All the Liberals here are for Prussia, and many Conservatives also. I am all for France, and hope to see Austria and Denmark recover their own.”

In his next few letters he naturally dwells on the great struggle on which the eyes of Europe were fastened. Writing from Penmaenmawr on September 5, he says—

“England has been quite astounded by the great news of the Emperor’s surrender. There must now, I presume, be peace—of a sort. But the unfortunate issue of the war has sown the dragon’s teeth of incurable animosities and endless disturbance in Europe. France will never consent to accept the position which Germany now will force upon her, and many generations to come will curse the destiny which gave Bismarck and his master the victory which they have won.”

Mr. Raikes continued his work of political organization throughout the year, and also took every possible opportunity of warning Churchmen in England that they must bestir themselves if they wished to avoid the fate of their brethren on the other side of St. George’s Channel. In April, he embodied his views in a lecture, which he delivered at a meeting of the Central Council of the Church Defence Institution. “Practicable Reforms in the Church Establishment” was the title of his paper, and he divided the subject

into three branches. The first related to the number of the bishops, which he contended should be augmented; the second to the affairs of Convocation; and the third to the reform of capitular bodies.

His words fell into fruitful soil, for Churchmen were, not without reason, at this time thoroughly alarmed, and he had the satisfaction of living to see many of his suggestions carried out, some in part, others in their entirety.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE greater part of the Session of 1871 was occupied by the Army Bill, a measure in which Mr. Raikes took much interest. In the early part of the year he published a series of letters in the *Standard* upon "Our National Defences," and went somewhat deeply into the subject. In these he avoided taking a party line, and discussed, from a practical point of view, the necessity of increasing our effective force, the difficulties in the way of abolishing the purchase system, which he admitted had little to be said for it, and the government of our army and training of our home forces. On the whole, he took no serious objection to the system then in vogue, but rather suggested that it should be amplified and extended upon existing lines.

The Army Bill was succeeded by the Ballot Bill, to which he was uncompromisingly opposed, but I have no record of any speeches delivered by him against it.

We may pass over the Sessions of 1872 and 1873 very shortly. In the former, Mr. Raikes took an active part in opposing the late Sir G. O. Morgan's Burial Bill, which he contended was absolutely unnecessary,

an opinion which the results obtained have largely justified; but with the exception of a threatened Ministerial crisis (over the Alabama affair), there was little to disturb the even tenor of the proceedings.

The Session of 1873 saw him to the fore in the debate upon the Endowed Schools Commission, when he protested strongly against the endowments left by charitable persons for the elementary education of the children of the poor, being diverted to the middle-class schools. He also took much interest in the Judicature Bill, which he succeeded in amending in several respects.

Almost throughout the Session, the House was in a state of unrest. In March Mr. Gladstone made the Irish University Bill, by which it was proposed to throw open fellowships at Dublin University to Roman Catholics, a question of confidence. After four nights' debate the measure was rejected, and the Prime Minister thereupon resigned. He was so freely blamed for taking this course, in many quarters, that it may be of interest to quote a few lines in respect of it, contained in a letter written to Mr. Raikes by the late Lord Coleridge, then Sir J. D. Coleridge, Attorney-General:—

“Let me add, though perhaps you will not agree, that I think Gladstone's resignation followed *of necessity* from his having made opposition to Fawcett a question of confidence in 1870 and 1871. That may have been wise or unwise, but having been done, all the rest followed *necessarily*.”

“Yours very truly,

“J. D. COLERIDGE.”

Writing on March 21, Mr. Raikes said—

“As for the crisis, I am glad it is over, and that our people were sagacious enough to decline office. They are quite right; but things seem rather flat just now after all the excitement of last week.”

It was, nevertheless, generally felt that a Dissolution might come at any time, and even so late as the end of June, he informed his mother that he was unable to make his plans for the summer.

The Conservative party were warned to hold themselves in readiness, and as early as March 28 Mr. Gorst, in his official capacity, wrote to Mr. Raikes advising him to set his house in order at Chester. As matters turned out, his letter was a little premature, but it throws an interesting light upon the view of the Ballot Act held by those responsible for the party organization.

“Do you think you are safe in fighting Chester without a colleague? You have so much experience in elections, and know Chester so much better than I do, that I merely put the question, as I feel it my duty to do.

“It appears to me that with the Ballot Act there will be great difficulty in getting men to plump, and a single man running against two opponents, may sometimes lose his election by the splits of his own friends. I dare say there is no chance of getting a second man in at Chester, but if you want what is vulgarly called ‘a waste-paper basket,’ you should lose no time in finding one.”

Mr. Raikes, however, thought it better to fight single-handed, and the result of his election in 1874, wherein, out of 2356 votes recorded in his favour,

2173 were plumpers, forms a curious commentary upon the letter quoted above, although its general wisdom cannot be doubted.

The year 1871 was marked by a great extension of the operations of the Church Defence Institution as a counterblast to the threats of Mr. Miall. The Rev. Dr. Lee, its energetic secretary, was sent on a mission to the provinces, where he was successful in forming numerous local branches. The higher clergy, too, began to realize the importance of organized opposition to the Liberationists, and by September, twenty-one out of the twenty-seven English bishops were enrolled as members.

The work was continued actively in 1872, and in this, and subsequent years, Mr. Raikes was in constant demand as a speaker, both on Church Defence topics, and on the subject of religious education.

At the close of the Session he took his family abroad with him to Dinant, and writing home late in August, he draws a pleasant picture of his holiday-making :—

“We do absolutely nothing here. We sleep (as well as we can); we breakfast (indifferently); we dig in the sand with the children (this we do *very* well); we bathe (as comfortably as preposterous foreign usages will allow); we lunch (after a promiscuous fashion of our own); we go out in boats, or we cross to St. Malo or St. Servan to shop for things we do not want, or we take long walks to more distant bays, or we dig again; we dine at the *table d'hôte* of one or other hotel (or as we have done to-day, infamously at home); we read a little, and have tea, and go to bed early—all these things we do—but we *never* write to anybody.”

An incident of this summer holiday, which bears witness to Mr. Raikes's coolness in emergency, impressed itself vividly on the present writer's memory. Mr. Raikes was, one afternoon, introduced by an acquaintance to a French gentleman. The last-named was standing at the very edge of the quay, and in the act of making his bow lost his balance, and would have fallen into the water, had not Mr. Raikes seized his outstretched hand. For a moment the result hung in the balance; then weight told; the strain relaxed, and Mr. Raikes fell flat on his back, pulling the Frenchman on to the top of him. The rescuer at once arose, with perfect gravity recovered his hat, evaded a threatened embrace, and continued his conversation as though nothing had happened.

Throughout the early part of 1873 he was in constant correspondence with Mr. Thomas Collins, upon the subject of denominational schools, in the position and prospects of which both were deeply interested. "Tom" Collins, as he was always called by his intimate friends, was much attached to Mr. Raikes, and always ready to render him uncompromising support. The latter, in turn, both liked and trusted him, although he derived some amusement, at times, from his general oddity and frankly avowed parsimony. This trait was amusingly illustrated by an incident which occurred at one of Mr. Collins's elections, which he himself used to describe with much gusto. On this particular occasion, some difficulty arose with the crier, whom he had engaged to

announce his meetings, on the question of remuneration. The bell-man stood out for certain terms, to which Mr. Collins declined to accede, and the conference ended in the former going off in a huff. This was rather awkward, as time was getting short, but "Tom," nothing daunted, took possession of the dinner-bell out of the hall, and "cried" the meeting himself quite in professional style, much to the delight of the electors.

The proceedings in Parliament during this year, 1873, have already been referred to, and there is not much in Mr. Raikes's platform utterances that calls for comment, with the exception of his address from the chair at the seventh annual meeting of the National Union, held at Leeds in April. After dealing with the position of the Union, he plainly indicated his confidence in the part which it was likely to play in the future political history of the country, by stating that there was nothing in his public life from which he could hope to derive more satisfaction than the part he had taken in founding the organization, and that, if it were not presumptuous to say so, he should continue to feel proud of having in any way contributed to the formation of those bodies, which, he was sure, "were destined to prove the foundation of the strength of the Constitutional party in this country."

That he was justified in speaking thus hopefully, was amply proved the following year, when the crucial test came. No doubt, public opinion would have

driven Mr. Gladstone from power in any event, but it is equally certain that the completeness of his defeat was, in considerable measure, due to the work of the organization which had grown into a power since the 1868 election; and this Mr. Disraeli was not slow to recognize.

Mention of the latter's name, recalls the fact that it was in April of this year, 1873, that he delivered his famous speech at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. In connection with this historical effort, I have heard Mr. Raikes repeat a story which has never, I think, found its way into print, although it is sufficiently credible to be true.

When Mr. Disraeli reached Manchester, almost his first act was to instruct a gentleman, who was in his confidence, to purchase, if possible, three bottles of *white* brandy. This task the messenger found great difficulty in accomplishing. He hurried from one wine-merchant to another. Some had never heard of the liquor. None had any of it in stock. At last, when almost in despair, he was told that if there was any to be had in the city at all, it was likely to be found in the cellars of a certain old gentleman, who was a collector of rare and curious wines and spirits. He hurried to the address indicated, and there found what he was in search of. The supply, however, was limited to two bottles, and the proprietor at first declared that nothing on earth would induce him to part with them. As a last resort, the messenger confided to him the reason why they were required. On

this the old gentleman jumped up, and himself fetched the two precious bottles, and sternly declining any suggestion of payment, placed them in his hands.

But the strangest part of the story is yet to come. The two bottles were duly conveyed to the hall, and placed under the table; and Mr. Disraeli gave his friend strict injunctions to keep the tumbler which stood upon it constantly replenished with brandy and water in equal quantities, while he was speaking. These instructions were carefully carried out, but after some little time had elapsed, Mr. Disraeli half turned, and whispered, "Stronger! make it stronger!" This he continued to repeat at intervals, until, towards the close of his very lengthy address, the friend was perforce driven into supplying him with the neat spirit, which, owing to its colour, was indistinguishable from water by those sitting round. And, at the conclusion of the speech, both bottles were empty!

CHAPTER IX.

DURING the autumn of 1873, Mr. Raikes was constant in his attendance at Chester, and when the appeal to the constituencies was made on January 24, 1874, all was in readiness there on the Conservative side.

The Hon. Norman Grosvenor, who had succeeded his brother unopposed in 1869, did not again come forward, and in consequence, no one directly connected with the house of Eaton was in the field. It was, however, generally supposed that Mr. Dodson (now Lord Monk Bretton), who had occupied the Chair in the previous Parliament, represented their interests; while Sir Thomas Frost, a local manufacturer, also stood as a Liberal. The contest ended in the return of Mr. Raikes and Mr. Dodson, the former at the head of the poll.

The election produced few incidents of note, but a report of one of Mr. Raikes's speeches, which he forwarded to Sir William Harcourt, drew from the latter an amusing reply:—

“Your speech was a very good one. I think you dealt with me as Isaac Walton did with the frog, when he baited him ‘very tenderly.’

“Your definition of the difference between the parties is

mighty neat. Do you see, Leatham describes the policy of the gentlemen who desire to seize the increment of land, as worthy only of 'pickpockets and philosophers.' Not so bad."

The active and prominent part taken by the senior member for Chester in the House of Commons, and on public platforms, in opposing the Radical propaganda, apart from his services as an organizer, had marked him out for office whenever the party, in which he was already looked upon as a rising politician, should again come into power. And in February of this year he was nominated by Mr. Disraeli to fill the honourable post of Chairman of Ways and Means, and Deputy-Speaker of the House of Commons. It was no secret that, at the time, he would have preferred the comparatively humble position of an Under-Secretary of State, in which he could have continued an active combatant in Parliamentary debate, to the more dignified but neutral office, which had usually been filled by men of greater age and longer Parliamentary standing.

But Mr. Disraeli had presumably already an inkling of Mr. Raikes's special aptitude for controlling and moderating the stormy passions of a popular assembly, and those who remember how he met and baffled the first audacious efforts of the Irish obstructionists, admit that he possessed, in a high degree, the somewhat rare qualities which should distinguish the Chairman of Committees of the House of Commons.

Mr. Raikes himself was so fully convinced that he could do better work in some other position, which

would, at the same time, give greater scope to his political ambitions, that he made several efforts to obtain the option of a more active if less important post. His friends, however, advised him not to reject the offer lightly, and he finally decided to take the position offered him, though very reluctantly.

When it became known that Mr. Raikes had accepted the appointment, letters of congratulation poured in in great numbers; but he derived little satisfaction from these, since, in spite of his decision, he remained convinced that he would not be a success as Chairman.

On March 21, 1874, Mr. Disraeli moved that Mr. Raikes should take the Chair on the House going into Committee of Supply, and the motion was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. Raikes retained his post for six years, and, to quote from the *Times* of August 25, 1891—

“It is pretty generally admitted that he discharged the duties of that office with firmness, courtesy, and discretion. . . . A Chairman must be an autocrat in some measure, and the qualities which have occasionally drawn censure upon Mr. Raikes during the tenure of his later office insured him success in the earlier.”

The *Daily News* of the same date said—

“He (Mr. Raikes) was firm and steadfast in his rulings. He was independent in his conduct, and pointedly refused to adopt Mr. Disraeli’s suggestion that Secretaries of State should be called Mr. Secretary Cross, or Mr. Secretary Hardy, founding himself, as he said, in preference ‘upon the precept and example of Mr. Speaker.’”

Mr. Disraeli's wishes upon the point, it may be mentioned, were conveyed to him by a message in pencil, written upon a tiny scrap of paper, and signed "D."

In spite of his private misgivings, there is little reason to doubt that Mr. Raikes was well suited to, and by his new duties. His health, certainly, suffered at times under the strain of the long hours, which prematurely whitened his hair; and the feeling that he had "shelved" himself occasionally caused him to despond. But, in the main, he found his work interesting, and he took great pride in doing it well, and in earning the respect and approval of both sides of the House.

Although, for obvious reasons, I do not propose to enter into domestic details in these pages, I may here quote a portion of a letter of a purely private character written by Mr. Raikes about this time. It was sent to his eldest son, Henry, who had just left home for school for the first time, and few boys, entering upon the battle of life, have received more tender, and withal, more practical advice. This is not my reason for inserting it. My intention is rather to give a glimpse into the intensely sympathetic and religious side of Mr. Raikes's character, some knowledge of which is essential in forming a judgment upon the whole. His tenderness of disposition was only realized by those brought into actual contact with him, and any estimate of his character founded merely upon the published records of his career would,

without an occasional sidelight of this description, be necessarily imperfect.

“There is much I ought to have said to you, and wish I had been able to say. But if you will bear in mind always what I hope you have learned already—to remember your God who loves you, and your father and mother and sisters who are always thinking of you ; to obey and to speak the truth ; to be good-humoured and to try to be interested in what interests your friends and companions, we shall hope that you will be happy in your new life, and will lay the foundation of much happiness for all of us in time to come.

“You will find many things you think hard—we all do ; make it your object to think little of them, and you will get over them.”

In the autumn Mr. Raikes took some of his family to the continent, and after visiting Brussels, journeyed through Rhineland. He gave several interesting glimpses of this tour in his letters to his mother. Writing from Nuremburg on September 20, he drew a realistic picture of its beauties :—

“I wandered back into the old castle and on to the ramparts by starlight, and was able to contrast their aspect by night with the brilliant picture by day. You must imagine huge gabled houses of every form, with every variety of fantastic oriel, high-peaked dormer-window, and quaint turret, alternating with church portals of almost lace-work elaboration, a rushing river crossed by many an ancient covered bridge, perfect walls flanked by innumerable grim old towers, and the moat below, one mass of garden and greenery—and all this quite real, with real people living in the houses, and real soldiers patrolling the streets, and the busy hum of real life convincing one that the scene is actual and not theatrical—all this crowned by the bluest of skies

contrasting with the garish red of the tiled roofs, and you have the faintest notion of the place.”

Before returning home, Mr. Raikes bent his steps once more to his beloved Italy, and revisited Naples and Rome amongst other places. Ravenna exercised a curious fascination over him, and he writes of it at length :—

“I am bound to say that, although nearly a fortnight's change of scene has, in no small degree, tended to shake off the singular spell of that weird city, I must still look back on our stay there as one of the most interesting experiences of my life, and as being something quite unique among all the associations of travelling which I have gathered together. I cannot now say what it is. The town is almost ruinous, and quite desolate. The dreary streets are almost entirely deserted. There are no beggars to speak of. There are no shops, no hotels, only one small piazza, to which it is almost impossible to make one's way through the tortuous labyrinth of lonely lanes and grass-grown courts. The few inhabitants who have escaped being murdered by the Secret Society, appear to be chiefly guides and assassins, sometimes, perhaps, both.

“But the churches, which outside look like tumble-down old barns, are all glorious within—like the king's daughter—their clothing is of wrought gold. From floor to ceiling they are walled with the most magnificent mosaics in all the colours of the rainbow, as fresh as when they were put up by Christian emperors and empresses twelve to fourteen hundred years ago. . . . But the most fantastic thing of all was our drive on Sunday afternoon out through the broken walls, by the utterly deserted plain, to the great cathedral of St. Appolinace, in Classe, which has survived by some fifteen hundred years the city of which it was the centre, about four miles from Ravenna. More splendid mosaics, columns of

priceless marble, a ruinous old campanile, a solitary farmhouse tenanted by one solitary and decrepit labourer; no congregation, no habitation, no living creature in sight. And then a drive of two miles more, and we cross a sluggish river, and are in the celebrated Pine Forest—and such a forest of romance: the velvet turf, the endless glades, the noiseless woodland paths, the sweet trees, the blue sky and boundless sunshine, all on the way as it seemed from nowhere to nowhere—it appeared the ante-room to fairyland; and we ran races with the children, and wished to stop there for ever. There were striped spiders running about as big as mice, that must have been familiars of the Lady Abracadabra, and hairy caterpillars (one of which T—— put into his pocket, as he said he wished to take it home and give it some tea) at least five inches long.

“However, we had to come away just at the hour of Byron’s ‘Ave Maria,’ and as we turned our backs on the forest, the vast plain was beginning to exhale a climbing mist, through which the sallow sun was hardly seen to set before we strained our eyes to catch the crumbling towers of Ravenna. Really, one could quite grasp Campbell’s idea of the Last Man—

‘The sun’s eye had a sickly glare,
The Earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of ages were
Around that lonely man.’

We quite felt that if we had stopped there longer we should have been bewitched.”

The little party got back to England at the beginning of December, their return being, perhaps, hastened by the rumour that Mr. Disraeli was seriously ill.

The work entailed by Mr. Raikes’s new office compelled him, in the course of the year, to relinquish more than one of the public positions which he had

held up to that time. Amongst these was the Presidency of the Church Defence Institution, in which, at his earnest request, he was succeeded, in 1875, by Mr. (now Lord) Egerton of Tatton, a selection which insured the continuity of that active policy which has become more marked in every succeeding year.

In June, 1875, he also, with much reluctance, decided to resign the Chair of the Council of the National Union, greatly to the regret of its members, who, on the 23rd of the month, passed the following resolution :—

“That the Council have received with deep regret the resignation of their highly valued Chairman, Mr. Raikes, and while feeling that it is for him to decide on the course which the high public position he so worthily fills calls for at his hands, they cannot refrain from expressing their sense of the loss which the Union will sustain in the withdrawal of one who has, for eight years, presided over their deliberations with ability and courtesy, and whose exertions in the cause have done so much to insure its success.”

CHAPTER X.

IN May, 1875, it was decided, in recognition of the increased work thrown upon the Chairman of Committees, to raise the salary of the office from £1500 to £2500 per annum, and on the 23rd of that month, Mr. Raikes wrote to his mother—

“I have felt half afraid that you have thought me rather scant of thanks for your kind congratulations on my prospective increase of official income, seeing that my letter of announcement crossed yours of congratulation. But you know how frightfully hard pressed I am at this time of year to find the necessary hours for sleep and food, and how entirely without a margin of leisure I am, now that I have entailed upon myself a new master, in the shape of a horse that must be ‘taken out’ every day for an hour or more, whether his slave desires it or not.”

From this time forward Mr. Raikes commenced to ride regularly, and derived the greatest benefit from the exercise. In spite of his fine physique, he was never really strong, and his long tour abroad the previous year had been taken mainly with a view to shaking off the effects of the Session. With the same object in view, he visited Belgium for a few days at Whitsuntide; but although he continued to go abroad at intervals, from this time forth he depended mainly upon his daily ride to keep his mental and

bodily powers in order. He added in the same letter of May 23—

“Mr. Disraeli’s suppressed gout, which is now the polite equivalent for unsuppressed ill-temper, compelled us to come back on Wednesday, as I could not be sure of getting to the House in time on Thursday. And now I can hardly believe that last Sunday we attended high mass at Antwerp.”

His increased salary was not, however, actually voted until nearly the close of the Session.

It was either towards the close of 1874, or at the beginning of 1875, that the St. Stephen’s Club, the early history of which has already been alluded to, threw open its doors; and in February Mr. Raikes mentioned in a letter that, on the whole, it was doing “very well.”

In February, too, he was appointed a governor of his old school, Shrewsbury, in succession to the late Sir G. Osborne Morgan, upon the nomination of Lord Cockburn. But he did not retain his position for long.

From the first, Mr. Raikes was bitterly opposed to the removal of the school from its old site, which was endeared to him by many tender recollections. The proposal took shape in 1873, and in company with Mr. Tudor and other old Salopians, he offered uncompromising resistance to the project. In consequence of their opposition, what was known as the Coton Hill site was abandoned, and a more suitable one at Kingsland selected. But Mr. Raikes was entirely against removal at all, and possibly his

desire to become a governor was prompted, to some extent, by the belief that, in that position, he might be able to avert what he regarded as a calamity. If so, his hopes were doomed to disappointment. The die was practically cast at the time of his nomination, and not many months later, when it became manifest that utilitarian considerations must triumph over sentimental ones, he resigned his seat. To the end, he maintained an attitude of indifference to "the new school at Kingsland," and would send none of his sons to it.

Neither the city of his birth nor his University, devoted as he was to both, held quite so deep a place in his heart as his old school; and constant in his affections and uncompromising in his feuds as he was, there is little room for wonder at his action on this particular occasion.

On April 17, 1875, Mr. Raikes shared the almost inevitable fate of all public men, and was caricatured in *Vanity Fair*. The portrait is not one of Pellegrini's happiest efforts, although he makes the most of his subject's unusual height, and represents the table of the House of Commons, at which he is standing, as reaching barely to his knees. The slight sketch of his career by "Jehu Junior" which accompanied it concluded—

"In this post (the Chairmanship) he has risen to a height seldom attained, and has performed his duties very conscientiously, and with a discretion the more remarked on account of what, in these days, would be called his youth.

For he is a serious man by nature, notwithstanding which, he is popular as well as successful. He is Chairman of the Church Defence Institution, but has no other weaknesses, except a taste for writing poetry, which is only redeemed by the fact that he never publishes it."

In the course of the same month, Mr. Raikes suffered a severe personal loss by the sudden death of his brilliant friend, Mr. Arthur Holmes. The news came quite unexpectedly, for only a few days previously Mr. Raikes had received a letter from him full of his (Mr. Raikes's) prospects at Cambridge, and the certainty of his being selected as candidate in case of a vacancy.

It happened that in June a picture of Lord Lyndhurst (Mr. Disraeli's earliest patron) was advertised for sale, and Mr. Raikes, on hearing that the Premier had expressed a desire to obtain possession of it, conceived the idea of getting a few Conservative M.P.'s to subscribe the amount necessary to purchase it, and of presenting it to him. The plan was voted a happy one, and the funds required having been guaranteed by twenty-four members, Mr. Raikes was deputed to attend the sale and make the purchase.

On arrival at the auction-room, he met Mr. Montagu Corry, and learnt from him that he had been instructed by his Chief to buy the picture, and was present for that purpose. Mr. Raikes hastily explained his mission, and asked that he might be allowed to carry it out. To this Mr. Corry gladly assented, and the two entered the sale-room together,

only to find, much to their chagrin, that the picture had been knocked down, a few minutes before, for a comparatively trifling sum—about £40, I think.

Mr. Raikes, with a view to discovering the purchaser, sought out the eminent salesman who was conducting the proceedings, and after explaining the circumstances, begged him to assist him in obtaining the picture, for which he was empowered to give a handsome figure, if necessary.

Mr. ——— was much interested. He would do all he could in the matter. He knew the purchaser well. He was an old customer of his, a great admirer of Mr. Disraeli, and a man of some importance in the West of England. He was quite sure that when he heard what was in contemplation he would surrender his bargain with the utmost readiness.

Somewhat consoled, Mr. Raikes took his departure. A few days later he received a most sympathetic letter from the auctioneer. That gentleman was really mortified to have to say that he had proved quite mistaken in his estimate of his customer's character. The latter had proved obdurate, and in spite of all possible persuasion, declined to pass on his bargain except at a most exorbitant profit. He had special reasons for valuing the picture, and really did not feel justified in parting with it for less than £250, or thereabouts—I am not certain of the exact figure.

A consultation among the subscribers resulted in a decision to pay the sum demanded, and eventually the presentation was duly made.

Mr. Disraeli was very deeply gratified. The picture itself recalled many pleasant reminiscences; the artist, D'Orsay, in days gone by had been one of his boon companions, and the partner in many a scene of festivity and frolic; whilst amongst the subscribers were a number of his most devoted personal followers.

A few months later Mr. Raikes, to his surprise and amusement, received a letter from Mr. —, which, in effect, ran—I am writing from memory—

“An American gentleman, who has visited Europe with the express purpose of buying the Lyndhurst picture, came to see me about it the other day. As you were the buyer, I have referred him to you, and *I trust that you will make as good a profit out of your purchase as I did.*”

This last sentence was, under the circumstances, somewhat enigmatical, but the probable solution was not long in offering itself.

Mr. Raikes used to laugh heartily over the incident in later years. “To think that — was such an old humbug,” he used to say. “It never occurred to me that he in the least doubted the truth of my explanation of my desire to buy the picture; but his letter plainly shows, not only that he did not believe one word of my story, but also that the picture was originally knocked down to him. As a reply to my supposed attempt to work upon his feelings, he promptly invented a mythical purchaser, and under the cloak of disinterestedness, drove an admirable bargain for himself. But the really delightful feature of his proceedings was his cool cynicism in showing

his hand when, from his point of view, there existed no further necessity for concealment."

In the autumn Mr. and Mrs. Raikes went for a tour in Scotland, and the former, in one of his letters, put into words an idea which must often have occurred to other travellers in that country—

"Our experience in Scotland," he said, "is that you meet all the nice people in the trains, and all the brutes at the hotels."

Amongst other places, they stayed at Ballikinrain Castle, the huge pile erected by the late Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, Bart., M.P., an eminent and wealthy Scotch manufacturer. The latter then, or during a subsequent visit, told him the following characteristic story:—

When the building operations at Ballikinrain were approaching completion, Sir Archy invited an old retainer, who had known him from boyhood, to inspect the premises, and personally conducted him over them. The old gentleman was a man of few words, and the only comment which could be wrung from him was, "Indeed it's big." "Well," said Sir Archy, finally, "what do you think? Lady Orr Ewing says it is not big enough."

This monstrous suggestion completely overpowered the faithful servitor's natural feelings of respect, and sharply ejaculating, "The dommed hussy!" he turned on his heel and took his departure without other word, good or bad.

Towards the end of October an appeal for advice

and assistance was made to Mr. Raikes by a gentleman who has since played no unimportant part on the political and judicial stage. Mr. Hardinge Giffard (now Lord Halsbury), perhaps the most brilliant and successful criminal advocate of his day, in spite of his services to the party and the obligations he had laid them under by his heavy pecuniary sacrifices, was at this time without a seat in the House of Commons, and with scant prospect of obtaining one.

In this emergency he turned to Mr. Raikes. "A crisis," he explained, "sometimes comes in men's lives, when they must move on or move back, and I think it has just now come to me."

It is unnecessary to enter into any detailed account of Mr. Raikes's exertions on his friend's behalf. It is sufficient to say that he did all that lay in his power, and, although for the time unsuccessful in finding Mr. Giffard a seat, he had the satisfaction of seeing his abilities and services almost immediately recognized by the offer of the Solicitor-Generalship. Had Sir J. Holker been willing to remain Solicitor-General, it is probable, judging from a letter in my possession, in which it is stated that "such an arrangement would obviate some difficulties," that Mr. Giffard's merits would have received even more distinguished recognition, and that he would have succeeded Sir R. Baggallay as Attorney-General.

The formal appointment was not made until November 25, but on the 17th of that month Mr. Giffard wrote—

“Everybody seems to know what ought, I believe, to be private and confidential, but I myself have kept it so. Meanwhile, let me thank you most heartily for your kind and most efficient aid both in advice and actual influence. I think to your advice—indeed, I am sure—I owe the opportunity of getting a seat.”

It was not, however, until 1877 that Sir Hardinge Giffard (as he then was) succeeded in effecting an entry into the House. On March 3 in that year he was duly elected for Launceston, and on the 4th he wrote to remind Mr. Raikes of his promise to act as one of his sponsors.

“You remember that you have promised to introduce me. . . . As I dare not leave this on Sunday (Sabbath Closing Bill!), I cannot be in time to take my seat to-morrow night.”

Mr. Raikes took the keenest pleasure in the subsequent successes of his friend, and the fact that he was so closely identified with the course taken by Lord Halsbury when the latter stood, as he supposed, and probably with truth, at the dividing of the ways, may, I trust, be considered a sufficient apology for the introduction of this instructive incident.

On January 9, 1876, Mr. Raikes paid a visit to Chester, and addressed a large meeting of his constituents. His speech was in the main a practically dispassionate summary of the work of the session. In the course of it he gave a curious illustration of the marvellous patience the House had displayed in dealing with the various difficult and perplexing questions and matters of detail which arose under

the Agricultural Holdings Act which deserves reproduction.

“A gentleman rose, I think four times one night in Committee, and catching my eye, said, ‘Mr. Raikes, I beg to move that the word “teasles” be here inserted.’ The House of Commons was so anxious to hear what he had to say that I don’t think anybody laughed, although that was the fifth night we had spent on the Bill.”

The same incident was celebrated in verse by, I believe, Sir Wilfrid Lawson. In the main this particular effusion was confined to a description of the abandonment of the Merchant Shipping Bill, and Mr. Plimsoll’s conduct on that occasion, but the following six lines bear upon the point mentioned:—

“This * proved for the time of the tumult a cure,
And we all settled down to discussing manure,
With the wisdom of owls, and the sharpness of weasels,
Attending to Acland’s discussion on Teasles ;
Who in the debate all day bore the brunt
With that eminent farmer, dear old Mother Hunt.”

It may be mentioned, in justice to the Minister for Education in the last Parliament, that he was not the hero of this episode.

Mr. Raikes’s duties in the Chair prevented him from taking any very active part in debate in the Session of 1876, but it may be noted that he once voted against the Government. The occasion was the Second Reading of the Prisons Bill, introduced by Mr. Cross. It was not regarded as a party measure by a section of the House ; indeed, the minority was

* Mr. Plimsoll’s withdrawal.

so diversified in its character that an analysis of the list of those taking part in the division was published under the head of "Curiosities of Voting." Chester, nevertheless, resented this display of independence on the part of her senior member, and lectured him severely in the local press, and I am not at all certain that his action on this occasion was not responsible for the first little rift in the Conservative party in the old city, although its existence was hardly suspected for some years.

In June Mr. Raikes was brought into close contact with Lord Redesdale. On the motion of the former, a Select Committee of five members was appointed to join a committee of five lords for the purpose of considering the question of the admission and practice of Parliamentary agents. Mr. Raikes and Mr. Dodson were two of the members selected to serve, and the amalgamated committees were presided over by Lord Redesdale.

The latter presented his report in July, and with it Mr. Raikes was in hearty accord. The main suggestions contained in it were to the effect that the authorities should have power to frame rules to suspend incompetent agents; that admission should be by examination, and that agents should be interdicted from dividing costs with the solicitors who employed them.

Mr. Raikes's relations with Lord Redesdale were always of a most cordial character, and when the former lost his seat in 1880 the latter wrote—

“I cannot say how much I regret the result of your election contest, and the loss I consider the House of Commons has sustained thereby. It will not be easy for them to find any one with whom I shall be able to work with equal satisfaction.”

In the latter half of July the Speaker was taken ill, and on the 21st Mr. Raikes, as Deputy-Speaker, was called upon in that capacity for the first time. He thus recorded the incident in a letter written to his son Henry, and headed, “From the Chair:”—

“I must begin my letter to you from this place, where I am sitting for the first time as Speaker (and where no other Tory has sat for forty years), although I can hardly find an opportunity to finish it to-night, as I think you may like to have it to keep afterwards.”

In March of this year (1876) Mr. Raikes rented Watton House, Herts, from the late Mr. Abel Smith, M.P. It was situated within easy run of London, and he was in consequence able, as a rule, to spend his Sundays in the country. He was at this time rather anxious about his sight, and had taken to wearing grey spectacles when in the Chair, in order to mitigate the effect of the gaslight. His opportunities of enjoying the fresh country air enabled him, however, to discontinue this practice after a few months' discomfort, and he was never attacked by this form of weakness again.

The Session over, Mr. Raikes retired to Watton, and there his fourth son, Thomas Algernon, was born in August. Sir Henry Wolff thus quaintly felicitated him on the event:—

“Many congratulations on the accession. There is no chance of your being ashamed at the Gate any more than in the Chair, for, wherever you are, and in whatever capacity you appear, you are always reporting progress.”

There was some very fair shooting attached to Mr. Raikes's new abode, and though he himself took no active part as a sportsman, he was very fond of walking with the guns, and displayed much interest in the proceedings. He filled the house this year for the first week in September, and took the field with his guests each shooting-day; but in the course of the second week business called him abroad, and seizing the opportunity of a visit to Austria, he remained away about a month. However, judging from a letter written by him on October 7, the expedition was not a great success. In it he says—

“My tour has been a very melancholy operation, so far as I have been concerned at the moment, as I was far from well nearly all the time, and had nobody to inflict myself upon. But I have seen several places which I greatly wanted to see, and which I think I may remember with more pleasure than I experienced in seeing them.”

On October 24 he attended the Diocesan Conference at Chester, and read a paper upon the “Reunion of Christians in its Home Aspect,” and the following day went on to Manchester in order to attend the annual meeting of the National Union. He was asked to preside over the Council's deliberations by the Marquis of Hamilton, but thought it better, in view of his position as Chairman, to decline the invitation.

It was in this year that Mr. Raikes inaugurated a small measure of turf reform. It had long been customary for the members representing Chester to subscribe jointly a sum of money to be run for at the annual races under the name of the Members' Plate, and it was in connection with this race that he took action. In spite of his predilection for riding, Mr. Raikes was in no sense a "horsey" man, and his acquaintance with racing was rather of a theoretical than a practical nature. But this, naturally, did not prevent him from holding certain views on the subject, the soundness of which many would be found to endorse nowadays. Taking as his starting-point the fact that the *raison-d'être* of racing is to improve the breed of horses, he argued that the running of young horses off their legs at two years old was on the face of it absurd. He was also of opinion that the minimum weight carried was far too low, and encouraged owners to keep bad horses in training; while, as a practical test, he regarded short distance scurries as of the very smallest value.

The conditions under which the Members' Plate was run did not accord with his views, and accordingly he announced that unless they could be satisfactorily amended he would have to consider the question of discontinuing his subscription.

The proceedings had at times resulted in a walk-over, and consequently his first stipulation was that there should be no race unless three horses came to the post. He further proposed that two-year-olds should

be excluded from the stakes, that the course should be lengthened, and that the minimum weight should be raised. He was, I think, successful in carrying all these points.

In spite of his limited knowledge, Mr. Raikes always took much interest in the great races of the year, and was fond, in spare moments, of devising appropriate appellations for prominent equine performers whose owners had neglected to bestow a name upon them. The victory of a stupidly or clumsily named horse in any big race always aroused in him some small degree of irritation.

CHAPTER XI.

IN January, 1877, Mr. Raikes paid his annual visit to Chester, in order to fulfil a round of engagements and to address his constituents. The proceedings at his big meeting were hardly as orderly as usual; but, in spite of a considerable amount of interruption, he managed to keep his audience fairly in hand, and by an act of simple and unpremeditated courtesy succeeded in silencing the malcontents. During the meeting a young man, who had taken an active part in fomenting disturbance, succeeded in forcing his way on to the platform. He was promptly pushed off, and fell heavily upon the reporter's table, amid considerable merriment. In this Mr. Raikes did not join, and jumping from his chair, took the man by the hand and assisted him to his feet. At the same time he expressed his regret that any one, whatever his conduct might have been, should have been so summarily dealt with at one of his meetings. This act of kindness to a rude and disorderly opponent was highly appreciated, and the member was enthusiastically cheered.

In the course of the same month he delivered an inaugural address to the members of the newly formed

Conservative Association at Oswestry, Mr. Stanley Leighton, with whom he was subsequently closely associated in Church Defence work, occupying the chair. He also, on January 22, attended a great meeting at Liverpool, at which Sir Stafford Northcote (the late Lord Iddesleigh) was the principal speaker.

During the early part of the Session his work was not of a stirring nature.

On March 4 he wrote to his mother—

“ I have been speaking twice this afternoon on the exciting subjects of Parochial Charities and Steam Tramways—‘ to such base uses may we come’—but I am glad to have got them over, as I am sufficiently my father’s son to be always anxious about anything for which I am responsible.”

In April he was hotly assailed by correspondents in all parts of the country on the subject of the new Standing Order it was proposed to move, by which existing gas companies were to be compelled to offer any additional capital which they might desire to raise, by public auction or tender. The object of the clause was that any surplus profits, beyond the sum necessary to pay dividends up to ten per cent. for each year of the company’s existence, and to create a reserve fund equal to one-tenth of the capital, should go in reduction of the price of gas.

This restriction in favour of the consumer, was stoutly resisted by many of those interested financially in the companies, but without effect.

But, generally speaking, public attention, at this time, was concentrated on affairs in the East, and little

interest was taken in the routine proceedings of Parliament which were not of an enlivening nature.

On June 24 Mr. Raikes evidently thought that the Session might possibly be wound up at an early date, for he wrote—"We have so little chance of doing anything in the House of Commons, that the sooner we vote the necessary supplies and escape the better."

But in speaking of "escape" he had reckoned without the Irish members. These gentlemen had given a good deal of trouble during the Session, and in July they began to obstruct the business of the House in earnest. Mr. Raikes, personally, had a very hard month of it, for in those days, long before the introduction of the twelve o'clock rule, the length of a sitting was often only governed by the capacity for endurance possessed by those taking part in the debate.

His letters, at this time, contain constant references to the Irish members whom he had to thank for many a sleepless night. As a rule, they treated the Chairman with courtesy, and apparently nourished no feelings of ill-will towards him, in spite of his firm hand. The first to break bounds seriously in this respect, was Mr. Callan, who, on July 30, during the Committee stage of the South Africa Bill, made an attack upon the Chairman on his calling Mr. Courtney to order. The *Standard* thus describes the incident:—

"Mr. Callan said the Chairman's ruling was an insult to the common sense of the House. An uproar ensued, and Mr.

Callan said his remarks were meant to apply, not to the Chairman, but to hon. members on the Ministerial benches. Amid great excitement, several hon. members stated that they understood the remarks as directed against the Chairman, who declared that unless the words were withdrawn he could not continue to conduct the deliberations of the Committee. Mr. Callan repeated that his words did not apply to the Chairman, and finally his disavowal of them was accepted."

Mr. Raikes, however, felt strongly that if the matter was allowed to rest there, his authority would be seriously undermined. He accordingly made representations to Sir Stafford Northcote, the leader of the House, who, no doubt, had reason for anxiety as to the progress of business, in view of the organized obstruction with which he found himself face to face, and evidently feared that if the question was raised again it might lead to further difficulties, for in a note, dated July 31, he replied—

"DEAR RAIKES,

"I have your note, and can only say that you must, of course, do as you think right about bringing yesterday's incident again before the House. I trust, however, that you will allow me to express my opinion that the matter is not one to demand further notice, as I cannot think that the disorderly conduct of a member of the calibre of Mr. Callan can really in any way affect your authority, which the whole House is anxious to sustain, and I may add, resolved on sustaining.

"Yours faithfully,

"STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE."

The position, generally, was one of peculiar difficulty. The Government (and in this they were supported by

the whole of the House except the followers of Mr. Parnell) had determined to conclude the Committee stage of the South Africa Bill in the course of the sitting, which commenced on July 31. On the other hand, the little knot of Irish Obstructives were equally resolved to exhaust the forms of the House in a desperate resistance. Preparations for the encounter were duly made on both sides, and Sir Stafford Northcote sent a second letter, dated July 31, to warn the Chairman to be in readiness for emergencies. It ran—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Looking to what is before us to-night, and to the possibility of our not only having to sit through the night, but even to go on with the bill through the morning, I wish you to consider what arrangements you can make for your own relief. My own idea is that, when you suspend the sitting at nine to get some refreshment, some one else should immediately take your seat and carry on the Committee till (say) two o'clock, or such other hour as you and he could agree on. Do you think Dodson would be disposed to help you? It would be a great coup if you could get him.

“Yours very faithfully,

“STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.”

In the event, the writer's anticipations of trouble were literally fulfilled, for the debate which commenced on Tuesday, July 31, did not terminate till two o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, August 1. During the whole of this time, Mr. Raikes never left the precincts of the House, and although relieved at

intervals by other members, spent the greater portion of it in the Chair.

An interesting account of the proceedings is given in the *Daily Telegraph*, August 2, 1877, and the following narrative is very largely drawn from it :—

“Tuesday night will be memorable in the history of the House of Commons as having been productive of a series of ‘sensation scenes,’ the like of which has not occurred, at least, since the time of the Long Parliament.

“Shortly before four o’clock the Speaker took the Chair, and then, for twenty-six hours, the House was almost solely taken up with the altogether unparalleled struggle forced upon it by the little knot of Irish members, known as the ‘Obstructives,’ but who strenuously deny ‘the soft impeachment,’ and claim to be regarded as most careful and considerate promoters of Parliamentary industry and efficiency.”

As soon as the Orders of the day had been gone through, and on the South Africa Bill being reached, Mr. O’Donnell moved to report progress. He was followed by Mr. Parnell, and at his heels came Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, rising to a point of order. “Very gently the Chairman suggested that it was for the hon. member to be guided by his sense of propriety as to the nature of the arguments he would employ.” At this point Sir William Harcourt joined in the fray, and a spirited encounter between him and Mr. Parnell ensued, in which the Irishman received severe castigation.

So far, little progress had been made, and Sir Stafford Northcote’s earnest request to the House to go on with the Bill was of small avail, for the

Obstructives insisted on a couple of divisions, figuring in the first as 3 to 149, and in the second as 2 to 134.

Government and Opposition were, however, alike in earnest. They meant the Bill to pass, whether the Irishmen wished it or not, and in order to utilize profitably their superior numbers, a system of relays was arranged. But the Obstructives were only just getting into their stride. They insisted on discussing every clause and line of the Bill; personal invective was indulged in freely, and points of order were raised continuously.

“In this exciting fashion the night wore on, and hon. members on both sides wore themselves out. The relays were organized. As he had pledged himself to do, Mr. W. E. Forster held his place, as did Sir William Harcourt. . . . Mr. Raikes, Mr. Childers, Mr. W. H. Smith, and Sir H. Selwin Ibbetson acted by turns as chairman. And the seven? Mr. Parnell and Mr. O'Connor Power held out till seven o'clock this morning. . . . Mr. Biggar took a nap on two chairs in the library of the House between six and eight o'clock, Mr. Gray having arranged to keep the ball rolling while his friends were sleeping.”

The Government relay who had left the House at eleven the previous evening, returned about seven o'clock on Wednesday morning, and soon after that time many of those who had been up all night took their departure. Three ladies remained in the Ladies' Gallery all through the night, one of these being Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, another the sister-in-law of Mr. Parnell.

Between nine and ten o'clock on Wednesday

morning the fight once more became fast and furious, and Mr. Parnell announced that he was far from regarding the contest as hopeless, since *he* had a relay coming over from Ireland in the mail steamer.

To cut a long story short, the struggle was maintained until after two o'clock on the Wednesday afternoon, when the schedule of the Bill was passed, and a few minutes later the Bill was also formally passed, and ordered to be reported to the House.

"After that the Speaker came into the House, and the remainder of Tuesday's work proper was gone through; Mr. Parnell and the other six taking it up with ready hands. But the great fight was over, and only its memory, which will long be held green, was left to those who had borne the brunt of it for six-and-twenty mortal hours.

"It was observed that the floor of the House was marked with traces of the ended battle, showing unwonted litter from the fact that it had been denied its customary daily sweeping.

"At twelve o'clock the chaplain had, according to rule, entered to say prayers; but to his surprise, found that his ministration of the preceding day sufficed. Towards the close of the sitting, Lord Beaconsfield entered the Peers' Gallery."

On August 9 Mr. Raikes alluded briefly to the "famous long sitting," in a letter to his mother, which begins—

"A discursive discussion on the Appropriation Bill, which began with the Khan of Khelat, and is now tending through Merchant Shipping towards Scotch turnpikes (it is true, though it sounds Bedlamish), leaves me, I hope, sufficient time to answer your last two letters. One of them, especially, I know came to me with a sweet home flavour, when I was first left disconsolate in London, and on some morning when I had got no letter from Watton. . . . You will have seen the

history of our famous long sitting, when we began in July and ended in August, and when we really did put down the Irish rebels at least for this Session. It will have to be done again, doubtless, and at the sacrifice of more time and temper, but for the moment I am glad to think that the Saxon has risen 'unwounded from the dreadful close, though breathless all.'

"By the way, you will be amused (though I think it no laughing matter) by the epigram on the Strand bookseller,* who has been selected to administer the British Navy on the verge of an European war.

" 'A *paper* fleet is this of ours,
If all they say be true ;
Let's hope the fleets of other Powers
Are *stationary* too.'

"It will be a comfort to get away from a humiliated Parliament, and a discredited Ministry, to the more ennobling society of my bairns by the Norfolk sea. I spent last Sunday with them at Hunstanton, much to my own benefit, and I have great hopes of getting away on Saturday evening for good and all."

At Hunstanton he succeeded, for the time, in banishing from his mind the cares and worries of political life, and threw himself with zest into the simple pleasures of the place, in which he took quite as much enjoyment as the youngest member of his family.

Mr. Raikes, tolerant as he was in his religious views, held strong opinions upon the practice of Confession, which, at this time, was on the increase amongst a certain section of Churchmen, and cordially approved of the action of the two Houses of Convocation in considering and confirming this year certain

* Mr. W. H. Smith succeeded Mr. Ward Hunt as First Lord of the Admiralty.

resolutions on Confession originally passed in July, 1873. Their effect, it may be mentioned, was to limit the practice to two exceptional cases, for which special provision was made.

It occurred to Mr. Raikes, and a few others, that it would strengthen the hands of the Church if a certain number of influential laymen were to express their concurrence in the views laid down by Convocation. He, therefore, prepared a circular letter adopting the resolutions, which was signed by thirty-eight members of Parliament; and in the course of September he forwarded copies of it to the Archbishops and Bishops. Amongst the signatories appeared the names of A. J. B. Beresford Hope, Arthur James Balfour, Marcus Beresford, Thomas Brassey, W. T. Charley, Wilbraham Egerton, W. Grantham, Stanley Leighton, Henry Cecil Raikes, and John G. Talbot.

The lay support thus given to the Bishops was much appreciated by them, and from most of them cordial replies were received.

In the course of the autumn Mr. Raikes revisited Scotland, and also made some little stay in Chester. His constituents, he mentioned in a letter written late in November, seemed "very sound and staunch, but not very much disposed to make a fuss about my visit." On the 27th of the same month, his youngest son, Arthur Whittington, was born.

The latter derived his second name from the family of his great-grandmother, the wife of Chancellor

Raikes, who was the last descendant of Dick Whittington's brother William.

Mr. Raikes took considerable pride in the link which connected him with the famous Lord Mayor of London, and always attributed his own fondness for cats, which was very pronounced, especially as regards those of a sandy colour, to the Whittington strain in his pedigree.

CHAPTER XII.

It is not within the scope of this work to enter at any length into a discussion of the Eastern Question. Still, it will, perhaps, be convenient to devote a few lines to affairs in the East during the years of 1875-77, as otherwise the meaning of the first few letters quoted in this chapter might be a trifle obscure to those unversed in foreign politics.

In 1875 disturbances arose in Herzegovina and Bosnia which, at first regarded as being of a comparatively trivial nature, in time assumed proportions sufficiently alarming to induce the Porte to appeal to the European Powers.

It is unnecessary to enter in detail into the steps taken by the latter in the early stages of the negotiations—such as the abortive Andrassy Note, or the Berlin Memorandum of May, 1876, from which England dissented. In that month the events occurred which led to the series of terrible massacres, which, under the name of the Bulgarian Atrocities, horrified the whole civilized world. A few weeks later, Servia and Montenegro revolted against Turkish rule, and Europe generally realized that she was face to face

with a crisis which might have the most far-reaching results.

Diplomacy exerted itself to the utmost to bring about a peaceful solution of the difficulty, but its efforts produced little effect, and in September, 1876, Russia suggested that recourse should be had to a forcible demonstration. To this England, in view of Treaty obligations, could not agree; and instead, it was decided to hold a Conference of the Powers, which met on November 22, 1876. The day following, the Porte proclaimed a new Constitution, and evidently regarding this as sufficient answer to the demands of the Powers, declined to take any further step.

After the Conference broke up, Russia continued to press for common action, but the British Government, anxious to let the new Constitution have a fair trial, held back awhile.

Negotiations continued to be carried on between the individual Powers and Turkey, with the result that peace was definitely concluded with Servia. Montenegro, however, still held out.

Meanwhile, both Russia and Turkey were arming, and it became evident that, unless some settlement could be arrived at, a collision was inevitable.

On March 31, 1877, a Protocol was signed in London by the Powers, in which the Porte was requested *inter alia* to replace its armies on a peace footing, and to put in hand the necessary reforms without delay. The Russian representative, before signing this document, made a declaration to the effect

that, as an earnest of the Porte accepting the advice of Europe, a special envoy must be sent to St. Petersburg to treat of disarmament. This Protocol the Turkish Government energetically declined to accept, and the Czah met their refusal with an order to his troops to cross the frontier.

Although the Turks had justly forfeited the confidence of England, the British Government declined to be a party to an attack made upon them in defiance of Treaty obligations. So long as Turkish interests alone were concerned, the Government maintained a policy of watchful neutrality. But the success of the Russian arms gradually opened a vista of terrible possibilities in regard to the interests of England herself. These latter Lord Beaconsfield was determined to safeguard, even though it should become necessary to check Russia's advance by force. Although to most Englishmen the idea of fighting side by side with the Turk was absolutely repugnant, with the majority the necessity of guarding the integrity of the Empire overrode sentimental considerations. But there remained a minority whose most ardent desire was to see the Turk utterly effaced. For us to interpose before Russia had completed her work was to them a crime. Blind to their country's interests, they cried out in horror at the suggestion that these must be preserved at any cost.

Chief among them was Mr. Gladstone. All his influence, all his authority, were thrown into the balance on the side of Russia, and the difficulties of

the Ministry were increased tenfold by his absolute disregard of patriotic considerations.

In a letter written by Mr. Raikes to his mother on May 11, 1877, he said—

“Our debate drags its slow length along, while the Russian armies are apparently advancing, with but little resistance, towards the points from which we shall never be able to dislodge them should they once occupy them. I suppose it is agreeable to Mr. Gladstone’s morbid vanity to be the hero of our rather unsubstantial conflict here; but the thousands and millions of people whose lives are to be sacrificed by his caprice—without him, and his supposed influence, we should have had no war at all—may rise in judgment against him some day.”

At last the Russians advanced to within sight of Constantinople, and the vanquished Sultan sued for peace. The gravity of the situation induced the British Government to summon Parliament for an earlier date than usual, and the two Houses met on January 17, 1878. Previously to this, rumours of dissensions in the Cabinet had been rife, and Lord Carnarvon’s strong speech upon the Eastern Question, followed by the remarkable disavowal of him in the *Standard*, signed “One who knows,” had produced a marked sensation.

On January 24 the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice that he would move a supplementary vote for Naval and Military Services, amounting to £6,000,000. On the same day Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, resigned, and his place was filled shortly afterwards by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.

Mr. Raikes wrote to his son Henry on January 28—

“I have been presiding over rather a stormy sitting in the House when the vote of credit for six millions was asked for. It is to come on again on Thursday next, but I have little doubt of the Government carrying it by a respectable majority.”

This anticipation was duly fulfilled, but only after debates which did little credit to the Opposition. Meanwhile, the British populace were growing daily more excited, and during the first week of February, agitation rose to fever height in London. On the 7th of that month, Mr. Raikes wrote to his son Henry—

“We are still unable to make out what the Russians mean by the Armistice. There were telegrams this afternoon that they were in the outskirts of Constantinople, and London has been greatly agitated. A large mob came to the House of Commons this afternoon clamouring for War, while we were having a very confused debate within, and the Radicals are getting into tremendous disgrace in consequence of their unpatriotic conduct. Our fleet is within twelve hours' sail of Constantinople, but the Ministers are unwilling to send it up, as it might give the Russians an excuse to push on and say we had set the example.”

A week later, on February 14, he wrote—

“This afternoon we hear, at last, that our fleet has sailed up the Dardanelles, and is by this time probably lying off Constantinople. The Russians almost certainly will proceed to occupy Constantinople in force, so we shall be very near coming to blows, if we do not actually strike out. . . . Mr. James Lowther is going to Ireland as Chief Secretary—a

place I rather thought I might like ; but they never seem to wish to get me out of my Chair."

On February 21 he wrote in a more hopeful spirit—

"We have just had very good news, viz. that Russia engages not to occupy Gallipoli on our engaging also not to land any soldiers there. Of course, they may break their word, as they have unfortunately done very often before, but still their making the promise looks more like an abatement of their extreme pretensions than anything we have seen lately. So we breathe a little more freely."

The relief did not last for long. The refusal of Russia to submit the Treaty of San Stefano to the proposed Congress, the calling out of the Reserves by the British Government, and the resignation of the late Lord Derby, sufficed to keep the minds of men in a ferment.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the subsequent developments of the situation which culminated in the Berlin Congress, from which the two British representatives, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury (Lord Derby's successor at the Foreign Office), returned bearing, in the words of the former, "Peace with honour."

It will have been observed that, in his letter of February 14, Mr. Raikes alludes to the choice of his friend, Mr. James Lowther, as Chief Secretary for Ireland, in succession to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach ; but it is not generally known that he himself was recommended for the post by Lord Salisbury, who on February 14 wrote—

“ I have made application in the ‘ proper quarter ’—which, however, in the matter of patronage is wholly self-contained. I shall be very glad if my agency should contribute to procure for you a change of work that is to your taste—and for Ireland an admirable nomination.”

It is more than probable that Mr. Lowther had been selected before application was made on Mr. Raikes’s behalf; but in any event, taking into consideration the Parliamentary conditions at the time, the Government would have been disinclined to make a change in the occupancy of the Chair unless compelled to do so by circumstances. Apart from the difficulties which a newcomer would have had to face as his successor, Mr. Raikes was peculiarly well fitted for the office he then held, in the opinion of many of those best qualified to form a judgment on the point. The general view was expressed in an article published in the now defunct *Hornet* early in 1878, and written by a gentleman closely in touch with the opinion of the House itself, from which the following is a short extract:—

“ He (Mr. Raikes) is just the man to be Chairman of Committees. When occasion arises for him to take the place of the Speaker, he has just the energy and force of character which enable him to hold his own when necessary. He has also that courteous bearing which, in so august an assembly as the House of Commons, secures the goodwill of those over whom he has been called to preside. . . . He is as popular on the left hand of the Speaker as he is on the right. . . . During the time Mr. Raikes has occupied the post of Chairman of Committees he has secured the good opinion of the House of Commons, and there can be little doubt he will, in the future,

be even more influential than he is at present. His knowledge of Parliamentary forms, and of the temper and prejudices of the House, eminently fits him for a more prominent position than that he now occupies."

Although at the time Mr. Raikes had, no doubt, a strong fancy for going to Ireland, no one was better pleased than himself at his friend's promotion. He had a genuine liking for "Jim" Lowther (as he was generally styled by his intimates), and revelled in his breezy buoyancy. Of the many good stories that he used to relate concerning him, I can at the moment only recall one which, whether true or not, is sufficiently characteristic to bear re-telling—

Towards the end of one of Mr. Lowther's meetings, the audience being largely composed of farmers, a solemn-looking individual arose, and remarked in sepulchral tones, "What you've been saying is all very well, but what I want to know is whether you hold with the Athanasian Creed." This was an undeniable poser; but the orator rose to the occasion, and nodding cheerily to the audience, replied, "On the whole, 'yes,' for all of us who have to do with land must appreciate the force of the noble precept, '*Cursed be he who moveth his neighbour's landmark.*'" This response went right home to the hearts of the farmers, and in the burst of applause which followed the questioner subsided.

There are few allusions in the early 1878 letters to proceedings in Parliament, apart from those referring to the all-absorbing Eastern Question; but in one

dated February 21, Mr. Raikes mentions casually that he has been making speeches "on the exciting topics of steam tramways, Manchester water, and ancient monuments." He further proceeds, in the same letter, to give some inkling of the catholicism of his literary tastes, for he says—

"On my way here I went to the bookseller's shop where my Parliamentary rubbish had been shot, and found that he would allow £2 18s. for it if I spent it in books at his establishment. So I bought the 'New Republic,' the 'Epic of Hades,' Taine's 'English Literature,' in 4 vols., Sterne's 'Works,' in 13 vols., a beautiful book of all Canova's statues, and the 'Anti-Jacobin,' for that money, so I hope you will think I laid it out well."

His work in the Chair was not quite so consistently arduous as in the previous Session. On May 31 he wrote to his son Henry—

"Did you see that the Australian eleven now in England beat the Marylebone Club nearly in one innings, getting W. G. Grace, the champion bat, out for four each time? Verily wonders will never cease!"

Mr. Raikes was never a cricketer himself, but he took much the same interest in a big match as he did in a big race, and this was always heightened if W. G. Grace happened to be playing.

The only time that he was actually brought into contact with a member of the Grace family, was on the occasion of a visit to Sir George Jenkinson, at the time when the latter represented Wiltshire in the House of Commons. Sir George had the express

stopped at the local station, but through some oversight omitted to send to meet his guest. The latter inquired for a fly, but without success, and was presently accosted by a "plain middle-class farmer man" with a pleasant face, who offered to give him a lift in his light cart. In the course of conversation, the driver mentioned his name, and added, "Perhaps I shall be better known to you as the father of the three Graces." Mr. Henry Mills Grace, who died in 1871, was, like his more famous son W. G. Grace, a country doctor.

The congestion of public business had for some time past occupied the attention of the authorities, and early in this year a committee was appointed to examine the question. Mr. Raikes, in virtue of his position, was one of the principal witnesses; but so many changes in procedure have been made of late years that it would serve no useful purpose to dwell on the views he then expressed. One of his replies, however, to Mr. Parnell, who was a member of the committee, and asked him to define "obstruction," has a more abiding interest. "Of course," said Mr. Raikes, "it is not easy to give any precise definition of 'obstruction' which might not be evaded by any member desiring to obstruct the business of the House, but I can say generally, that to my mind, 'obstruction' includes frivolous objections, constant repetitions of the same arguments, an evident desire to waste time, or the use of such arguments as are likely to introduce into the question matters of controversy tending

unduly to protract debate. There is also another form of obstruction, which consists in raising over and over again points which have been ruled out of order by the Chair." This summary embraced most of the methods adopted by his interlocutor and his supporters, and seems to cover the ground with some accuracy.

Mr. Raikes, probably in consequence of his appearance before the committee, was at this time the recipient of numerous letters suggesting various possible, or impossible, reforms of the procedure of the House; but I do not think that he derived much practical assistance from any of them. Some of them, nevertheless, were very curious; and high amongst these ranked the contribution of a certain noble lord, since deceased, whose efforts in the direction of reform were apparently hampered by the fact that—

"My speeches are never reported, except in Hansard, and I have some trouble in recalling them; but the reporters embarrass rather than aid me, for they do not care to study truth, which I endeavour to do."

After spending the early part of the vacation at Sandown in the Isle of Wight and at Watton, Mr. Raikes bent his steps abroad, in company with his youngest brother Arthur, towards the end of September.

In a letter to his son Henry from Luchon, on October 3, he describes his ascent to the Porte de Venasque, as "the most adventurous feat of his life." The account may, perhaps, seem a little over-drawn

to those who make a business of climbing, but it must be remembered that Mr. Raikes had had little experience as a mountaineer :—

“For seven miles we rode up a steady ascent through stupendously beautiful valleys coloured with all the tints of autumnal foliage, and many-coloured rocks of enormous height—but along an excellent road up to the Hospice. Here we were about 5000 feet above the sea, and the awful ridge towered right over our heads 3000 feet higher.

“Off we set, however, by a series of zigzags rather scratched than made on the perpendicular face of the mountain. In no case were they less steep than the roof of a house, and at the corners and in several other places they were scarcely less steep than the wall.

“Ever beneath us grew the precipice, growing from hundreds to thousands of feet. Still above us towered the mountain, up which we seemed to make hardly any progress, while it was far too dizzy to measure it by looking down into the valley. Here and there we struggled past mountain sheep. Once or twice we saw on distant precipices goats which must have had wings to get there. Under our feet the almost unnoticeable path differed only from the grassy side of the mountain by the loose stones through which our poor horses painfully stumbled along.

“After about an hour of this we got on to a sort of sloping terrace where we had better foothold. Here we met some shepherds and Spanish peasants. At last we came to the mountain crest. Here the zigzags were shorter, the turns more perpendicular than ever. And the path was over the face of the naked rock.

“Then we reached the frozen snow about half a mile from the top. Here we got off, and scrambled along with half-shut eyes, not daring to look above or below us, and dragged our horses by the bridles behind. Once I slipped in a snowdrift, and my mare, struggling up behind me, slipped half on to me and put her foot on mine.

“But we got out of the drift, and in another moment stood in the crack in the ridge, which is the gate between France and Spain. Right in front spread the huge mass of the Maladetta, the highest of the Pyrenees, with its great snowfields, 11,000 feet high ; but below and between spread a sunny though barren valley, into which we soon descended, and stopped at a deserted hovel to get our lunch.”

Mr. Raikes returned to England in the latter part of October, but in his letters written at this time he makes few references to public affairs. On October 31, in a letter to his mother, he remarked—

“The political outlook is, I think, very gloomy. There is only the scantiest hope left of escaping an Afghan war, and it seems only too likely that we shall have to fight Russia, after all, if we are to get the Berlin Treaty carried out.”

With the exception of this passage, the letters in my possession, written in the autumn of 1878, are occupied almost entirely with details of that home life which the writer of them loved so well.

So far as he personally was concerned, the work of the Autumn Session was not particularly heavy, and Mr. Raikes mentioned in one of his letters that he had very little to do.

CHAPTER XIII.

EARLY in 1879 rumours of an approaching Dissolution caused the two rival political camps at Chester to commence setting their houses in order. The Liberals, in particular, displayed great activity, and made considerable headway. Marked encouragement was given them from headquarters, and in August Mr. Gladstone made his appearance in person, and addressed a large and enthusiastic meeting. The local managers were able to congratulate themselves upon a most successful *coup*, but the outside world opened their eyes wide at the spectacle of Mr. Gladstone assisting in an attack upon the seat of an officer of the House. Needless to say, much indignation was evinced among Mr. Raikes's friends and supporters within and without the constituency, and he himself shared in the feeling to the fullest extent.

In order to counterbalance the efforts of their opponents, the Chester Constitutional Association organized their annual *fête* upon a larger scale than usual this year, and it was attended by some 3000 people. It took the form of an immense picnic at Rhyl, and was held shortly after the great Liberal demonstration. This afforded Mr. Raikes a convenient opportunity of expressing his views upon the

subject of Mr. Gladstone's visit, and he did so in a speech of remarkable vigour :—

“ Throughout the six arduous years during which it has been my duty to stem the tide of tumult and disorder within the House, and to vindicate the great traditions of English public life, it has been my happy privilege to receive from one and all—from one leader and from the other leader, from one party and from the other party—that cordial, that generous, and that constant support which alone has made my task possible. But there has been one exception. One man out of the British House of Commons—that not a mere private member, not a novice in political warfare, not an inexperienced enthusiast who has rushed into Parliament full of the latest cries which may have captivated a section of excitable electors, but a man who has sat, as he lately told us, in eleven Parliaments, who has been Prime Minister of England—a man who has led the House of Commons, has felt it compatible with his idea of public duty within three days of the end of the Session to come down into a constituency with which he has no earthly connection, in order to denounce that man whose position in Parliament can only rest upon the cordial co-operation, as I have told you, of all parties ; to deviate from the honourable traditions of Parliamentary life, to violate the very first instincts that guide all Englishmen in dealing with each other, to trample upon the traditions of English gentlemen, and to tread underfoot those principles which actuate in every sphere of life the Englishman, be he nobleman or workman.

“ I wish to speak with all becoming respect for every political opponent, and Mr. Gladstone in particular. I believe, as far as I can judge, that I have a greater respect for Mr. Gladstone than he appears to have for himself. Some people might stigmatize the course he took with very hard epithets. I will only say that I regret to see the decline of a great reputation, and that I lament as much as any of his own supporters can lament, that so great and so distinguished a

man as Mr. Gladstone should have been so unworthy of Mr. Gladstone's fame."

This speech brought in a sheaf of letters, some complimentary, some very much the reverse.

During the winter months Mr. Raikes continued to prosecute his campaign vigorously, but in spite of his efforts the Liberal reaction showed no signs of diminishing. In consequence, he decided to call in help from outside, and in December wrote to Sir Richard Cross (Lord Cross) to point out the necessity of sending down a Cabinet Minister in order to counteract the effect of Mr. Gladstone's speeches, and efforts generally, on behalf of his kinsman, Mr. Beilby Lawley (Lord Wenlock), who had been chosen as the second Liberal candidate, and to press Sir Richard to come himself, if possible. In due course he received the following reply :—

"I quite agree that, if it be your desire, all possible assistance should be given to you as against Gladstone and the Duke ; but I am afraid that it will be impossible for me at the present moment to be *the* one of the Cabinet to come to Chester, for reasons which I think you will yourself say are good.

"I do not like Cabinet Ministers speaking too often, nor does the Chief ; and having spoken once since Harcourt invaded my region at Southport, I have declined to speak at Wigan, St. Helens, Liverpool, and Warrington, and have just accepted the arrangements made for me by my chairman to meet all the Heads of the party, and some of the Tails (without speaking), for a whole week of dissipation on January 5, etc., and if any speech is to be made it is to be made at Warrington, but most probably *none*.

“Anyhow, you see it would be impossible, after all this, to appear outside my district at Chester at the present moment. . . .”

The mention of Sir William Harcourt's name reminds me that earlier in the year, in July, Mr. Raikes received a very cordial letter from him on a personal matter, which ended as follows:—

“I am very glad to find that the reports of Dizzy's illness have been exaggerated. Though I heartily wish to see him out of office, there is no one who would be more sorry than I to lose him out of the world.”

A curious bond of affection had always existed between Mr. Disraeli and Sir W. Harcourt, which dated back to very early days when the elder man had some hope of attaching the rising barrister to his own side. At that time the latter was a constant guest at Mr. Disraeli's table, and at one of the earlier of these parties an incident occurred which I give, on Mr. Raikes's authority, as having been related by Sir William Harcourt himself.

It happened on the occasion in question that Mr. Harcourt, as he then was, was placed next to Lady Beaconsfield. On the wall opposite them hung a portrait of a lightly-draped female figure, and during a pause in the conversation, the guest's eyes happened to wander to it. “I see you are looking at *that* picture,” suddenly broke in the hostess with a laugh. “I always say that it oughtn't to be allowed in here—but it is nothing to the Venus that Dizzy has in his bedroom.” “That I can quite believe,” replied Mr.

Harcourt, gallantly, with a bow. The answer appeared to tickle her ladyship immensely, so much so that Mr. Harcourt, feeling that he had ventured on to rather delicate ground, quickly changed the subject.

But the incident was not thereby disposed of, for later on, when the party had reassembled in the drawing-room, Lady Beaconsfield suddenly called to her husband across the room, "I want to tell you such a funny thing that Mr. Harcourt said to me at dinner." And then out came the whole story *coram publico*.

"I never felt more uncomfortable in my life," Sir William used to say in telling the story. "But when Lady Beaconsfield had finished Dizzy made no comment, but slowly turned his eyes upon me with his usual grave smile. Many men would have evinced some sign of annoyance, but he did nothing of the sort, and afterwards his kindness to me never varied."

In a letter to his son Henry on June 13 of this year, Mr. Raikes incidentally mentioned that he had heard of him through Mr. Peter Rylands, M.P., who also had a boy at Charterhouse, and the reference recalls the amusement with which Mr. Raikes used to dwell upon his colleague's strictures upon the service at the school chapel. "It isn't bright enough," the latter complained; "there ought to be more music and so on to interest the boys." "Considering the strictness of Mr. Rylands' views (he was a rigid Nonconformist), he was," said Mr. Raikes, "the last person from whom I should have expected such an expression of opinion."

Mr. Rylands had many solid qualities, but he was not an inspiring speaker, and on one occasion in the House, when he was on his legs and appeared likely to remain there for some time, this was brought home to him in a somewhat unkind manner.

As he proceeded with his indictment of the Government a slip of paper began to travel along the benches, and in its course aroused a good deal of merriment. At length it reached the orator, and on looking at it he was confronted with the following doggerel:—

“Preposterous Peter, prithee cut it short ;
That Dizzy doeth what he didn't ought
We know. Yet life were sweeter,
Which gave ten Dizzys and dispensed with Peter.”

The cruel part of it was that the effusion emanated from his own side of the House.

Although a good deal of fitful obstruction was indulged in during the Session of 1879, it did not assume a really rampant form till towards its close.

Writing to his son Henry on July 19, 1879, Mr. Raikes said—

“I had fully intended to write to you on Friday evening, as I often do ; but a very unusual thing prevented me. At 7 p.m. the Speaker informed me privately that he understood that the House would be kept up all night, and very probably through Saturday also, over the Army Bill, and that, as he did not think he could last after 4 a.m., he wished me to take his place about that time. So I had to go to bed at 10.30, get up again at 2 a.m., breakfast at 2.30, and was in the House ready for work, though not at all anxious for it, by 3.15. And then the Irishmen gave way, and before 4 a.m. the Bill was through. So I crept back again to bed, though not to

sleep, and was glad enough to get away by the morning train to Welwyn."

No very long or uninterrupted period of leisure awaited Mr. Raikes on his return home. The position of affairs at Chester, as already indicated, was causing some anxiety, and he was not able for long to defer his campaign in that quarter. In spite, however, of the ordinary run of meetings and other engagements, he found time, in response to a pressing request from Mr. James Knowles, to contribute an article on the business of the House of Commons to the *Nineteenth Century*, which appeared in the November number. Mr. Knowles, in preferring his request, wrote—

"I am, of course, aware that nobody could write upon the subject with more familiar knowledge of it than yourself, nor is there anybody whose suggestions would carry greater weight."

A few days later Mr. Raikes left for South Wales, and stayed with his old friend, Mr. Gwyn, for the Church Congress at Swansea, where he spoke on the subject of Lay Work in the Church.

On his return he plunged vigorously into election work at Chester, and from that time on until Christmas held two or more meetings every week.

The only measure of which I can find record which Mr. Raikes took an active part in promoting during the year, was a Taxation of Costs Bill, which was backed by Sir J. Mowbray. I do not think, however, that it ever advanced beyond its initial stages.

CHAPTER XIV.

A FORETASTE of the lines upon which the Chester election of 1880 was fated to be fought, was afforded at a large meeting held by Mr. Raikes a few days before his return to his duties in the Chair. The speakers, who included Sir Hardinge Giffard (Lord Halsbury), then Solicitor-General, and Mr. Staveley Hill, M.P., were subjected to constant and prolonged interruption, and Mr. Raikes, personally, was unable to conclude his remarks in consequence of the uproar which prevailed.

While the Chairman was detained in London by his Parliamentary duties, his opponents were actively engaged in a personal canvass of the constituency. Unable to counteract their efforts by his presence, Mr. Raikes availed himself of the only expedient open to him, and issued a circular deprecating the attempt to take advantage of his enforced absence on the public service, and pointing out that the course taken by his colleague, Mr. Dodson, devolved upon him the responsibility of acting as the only representative of Chester in Parliament. He did not, however, by any means lose heart.

He himself was not, it seems, very strongly

in favour of bringing forward a second Conservative candidate, although an understanding arrived at in 1869, when it was decided not to oppose the Hon. Norman Grosvenor, had been disregarded by his opponents when they brought forward Mr. Lawley, a nephew of the Duke of Westminster, and a connection of Mr. Gladstone's, in conjunction with Mr. Dodson. In 1874 the Conservatives regarded the last-named as the Eaton nominee, and although they might have carried both seats on that occasion, in pursuance of the tacit compact with the Duke of Westminster that he would not use his influence on behalf of the second Liberal candidate, and would thus leave one seat to be contended for by the direct representatives of the two parties in the city, they refrained from putting a second candidate in the field.

But under the changed circumstances, with practically two Eaton nominees in the field, they insisted on bringing out a second man on their own account. It may, of course, have been the case that the Duke of Westminster considered that the understanding arrived at in 1869 was only to extend over the next election; or again, the Conservatives may have been mistaken in supposing that Mr. Dodson was in any way the representative of the House of Eaton.

But, be this as it may, the appearance of the two candidates, each of them backed by the Grosvenor interest, and supported by the full force of the Liberal party, created a very sore feeling, and the Conservatives felt that they had been very shabbily treated.

Their choice eventually fell upon Colonel Sandys, now member for the Bootle division; and Mr. Raikes, in company with him, formally opened the campaign on March 15, by holding a large and enthusiastic meeting at the Linen Hall, the scene of the fiasco of the previous month.

On March 21 Mr. Raikes wrote to his son Henry—

“As I am on my feet from morning to night on every week-day, at present my only chance of writing to you will be on Sundays. I came down here last Monday for a day, and had the best meeting in the Linen Hall Rink which I have ever seen in Chester. My ally, Major Sandys, whom we hope to make my colleague in the next Parliament, has been very well received, and the general feeling appears now to be decidedly in our favour. But the enemy will strain every nerve, and are spending money most recklessly to keep us out, and it will be a very hard fight yet. Still, we are fairly hopeful, though we shall be pretty well worn out by the time when the election comes off, which is fixed for Thursday week, April 1. Some people, let us hope not ourselves, will undoubtedly be April fools that day. I expect to remain here all the time till then.”

The tenor of the next letter is of a very different character, and not only illustrates the tenderness of the writer in his domestic relations, but also brings into relief the depth of the religious feelings which were so powerful a factor in shaping his life. It is dated “Easter Sunday, 1880,” and runs as follows:—

“I do not like the day of your first Communion to pass without a few words of love from your father. It is, perhaps, the most important step that one takes in life as the actual act of allegiance to our Lord and Master, which had previously

been a duty for which others on your behalf were responsible in the first instance. We can only hope that our dear boy has felt it thus, and has realized something, both of the solemnity, and of the immensity of the privilege of becoming thus directly associated with our Lord.

“I thought not a little about you as we stayed in the Cathedral this morning, and I was rather happy to think that we were, at the same time, sharing your privilege under the same roof under which I was first received into the Church more than forty years ago.”

The nomination of candidates took place on March 30, and in addition to the Conservative and Liberal candidates, a gentleman named Malgarini, who described himself as “Independent,” was put forward.

I fear, however, that the late-comer derived little satisfaction from the contest, for from the first moment of his appearance he seemed to excite the most violent animosity in the breasts of the lower orders on both sides. He only attempted to hold one meeting, and directly he appeared on the platform attired, according to the local press, in evening dress and white gloves, he was greeted with such a shower of rotten eggs, soot, and flour-bags, that he was compelled to beat a hasty retreat without having given utterance to a single remark. His candidature, and proceedings generally, furnished the only humorous element in the contest; for the real fight was waged with deplorable bitterness, and the Liberal mob, in particular, committed violent excesses.

The poll was declared on the night of Thursday, April 1, with the following result: Dodson, 3204;

Lawley, 3147; Raikes, 2056; Sandys, 1961; Malgarini, 16.

This signal victory for the Liberals came as a surprise to both parties. Up to the very last Mr. Raikes expected to retain his seat, and only the more sanguine of his opponents ventured to predict a win for Mr. Lawley.

In a letter written to his three younger daughters jointly, on April 4, Mr. Raikes gave a description of the last few days of the contest, which, astounding as it may seem, was more than justified by the revelations made later on in the course of the petition whereby the two Liberal members were unseated, and before the Commissioners by whom the city was subsequently disfranchised. In this letter Mr. Raikes wrote--

“I have been really almost stunned by the suddenness and magnitude of our overthrow at Chester. Actually, until I saw the numbers in the Town Hall, a few minutes before they were declared, I still cherished the hope that I might have saved my seat. The majority against us was much larger than even our adversaries, with all their bragging, had anticipated. Some six hundred voters who had promised us, must have been bribed, or terrified, into voting for the Radicals. The town was practically given up to the mob throughout the afternoon. Two or three of our committee-rooms were literally wrecked by the enemy, our windows at our head office were smashed three days running, and we could only protect our books and papers by having forty fighting-men to guard them night and day. Many of our poor supporters were most cruelly ill-used. A poor young girl, who was wearing blue ribands, was seized by the Irish hags in Boughton, and nearly torn limb from limb. She was with great difficulty rescued from their clutches by Edward

Lloyd and Willy Briggs, who also took some voters who had been so beaten and kicked that they could not walk, by a boat along the river and through Mr. Lloyd's garden to escape the mob. My grandfather's monument in the cemetery is said to have been broken and defaced. And Mr. Duncan's (Mr. Raikes's agent) life was so seriously threatened that he was obliged to sleep at the hotel lest he should be murdered on the way home. So, altogether, Chester has distinguished itself in a way not likely to tempt me, or anybody else, greatly to desire to represent it again."

Immediately after Mr. Raikes's defeat, the late Sir Watkin Wynn, regardless of the circumstance that such a course would undoubtedly jeopardize his own election, invited him to stand as his colleague for Denbighshire, a two-member constituency returning a Conservative and a Liberal. Lady Wynn went even further, exclaiming, "You must be in the next Parliament, Mr. Raikes, even if Sir Watkin has to give up his own seat to you." A rare instance of friendship this, and one which Mr. Raikes never forgot!

The *Standard*, in a leader devoted to the general rout of the Conservative party at the polls, remarked—

"The news of Mr. Raikes's defeat at Chester will elicit other than purely party regrets. In his capacity of Chairman of Committees he has won popularity as well as esteem. A loyal Conservative, he has displayed in his official duties consistent impartiality. His manner has always been courteous, and his judgment generally correct. Mr. Raikes will not have much difficulty in finding a seat elsewhere. There is, at least, no reason to anticipate his absence from

the new House of Commons—an absence which would generally be regarded as a real party loss.”

There can be no doubt that the ability and impartiality displayed by Mr. Raikes during his tenure of the post of Chairman had gained him many friends on both sides of the House ; and until he lost his seat he was looked upon as Mr. Brand’s probable successor. This view, which was shared by many experienced politicians, had been given currency in a paragraph in the *World*, published a few weeks earlier—

“ It is said that a new Parliament is likely to produce a new Speaker. Political speculation is naturally turned this way. For practical purposes the best man would, no doubt, be Mr. Raikes. As Chairman of Ways and Means, he has shown a mixture of judgment and firmness, with readiness of resource, which eminently qualify him for the post. If the House were to vote by ballot on a list of candidates, Mr. Raikes would, no doubt, be the one selected. Rumour, however, also points to other candidates with less experience but broader acres.”

Speculation on this point was, of course, cut short so far as Conservative candidates for the post were concerned, by the result of the General Election. It is, however, by no means certain that, had fortune placed the Speakership within Mr. Raikes’s grasp at this time, that he would have accepted it, although possibly he might have done so. Doubtless, this dignified post had many attractions for him, but it was never really one of the objects of his ambition ; and he always regarded it rather as something which he might without discontent fall back upon, failing the realization of his

more cherished hopes, than as a thing to be actively striven for. Still, he was careful not to let his claims sink completely into abeyance, and later on, once, if not oftener, pressed them to some extent when there appeared to be a possibility of a vacancy.

So far as Chester was concerned, the Liberal triumph was of short duration. The Conservatives decided to petition, and the case came on for hearing before Mr. Justice Lush and Mr. Justice Manisty on July 13. So many instances of bribery and treating were brought forward that, on the 17th, the respondents announced their intention of contesting the matter no further. The judges thereupon announced that the petition had succeeded, and that Messrs. Dodson and Lawley must be unseated, although no blame attached to them personally. They took time to consider whether they should certify that there was reason to believe that corrupt practices had extensively prevailed, but apparently had little difficulty in making up their minds, for, later in the day, they announced that they had decided to do so.

The downfall of his opponents, perhaps, aroused a little bitter satisfaction in Mr. Raikes's breast, but he by no means shared in the elation of his more enthusiastic supporters. An act of justice had been done, but the gulf existing between Chester and himself could, he felt, never be bridged over.

One of the earliest to congratulate Mr. Raikes upon the result was Dr. Kennedy, who wrote, in characteristically vigorous style, as follows, on July 19:—

“I heartily rejoice in the retribution which has overtaken all parties concerned against you in the Chester election. I have no pity for any of them, for Gladstone least of all, whose conduct in personally introducing into that city a second nominee of Eaton has always seemed to me deserving of the utmost reprobation. The unseating of that nominee, in company with one of his own Cabinet, must be a bitter pill for him, especially when accompanied with a report of extensively corrupt practices.”

The recommendation of the judges resulted, as a matter of course, in the appointment of a Commission, and on October 7 the Commissioners, Mr. A. J. Collins, Q.C., Mr. A. T. Lawrence, and Mr. F. Lockwood, formally opened their inquiry.

Writing to his mother from London on October 12, Mr. Raikes said—

“We are all here regaling ourselves with the reports of the Chester Commission. So far, we have reason on the whole, I think, to be well satisfied. The exposure of — has been complete, and I hope — will be equally shown up. That wretched Salisbury has not spared dear L—, or the poor old Misses W—, with his calumnious tongue. But his impudent fabrications are not likely to do much harm to any one, so far. I may have to give my evidence on the 23rd, but do not expect to appear much sooner, and I have exceedingly little to tell.”

Mr. —, above referred to, had admitted to the Commissioners that he was the “milch cow” (the “Welsh cow,” as it appeared in the *Standard*), of the Liberal party during the election; and that he had spent £1100 to £1200, mainly for illegal purposes,

out of his own pocket. Mr. Salisbury, to whom reference is also made, had degraded himself by asserting that a number of ladies, including some of Mr. Raikes's relatives, who for years past had laboured amongst the poor, had, under the guise of charity, administered bribes.

I think that this malicious suggestion made Mr. Raikes more angry than anything else which occurred in connection with the proceedings, and he wrote again a few days later—

“MY DEAREST MOTHER,

“I cannot say how grieved and disgusted I am at all this annoyance which has befallen you and dearest L—— through the malignant misrepresentations of the Radical crew. Poor L——'s life of unobtrusive and innocent benevolence to be made a source of slander against her, when she was actually hundreds of miles away at the time of the election, seems very hard. But she has only to appear to confound all their politics and knavish tricks to boot.”

Eventually all the ladies thus slandered did appear, and gave an emphatic contradiction to the false charges; so that this particular attempt to throw mud was not altogether a success.

Mr. Raikes had little evidence to give beyond disposing of some of Mr. Salisbury's baseless charges. He made, however, one neat hit at this gentleman's expense when he was examined as to an occurrence of which Mr. Salisbury, and another person concerned, gave different versions. While he admitted that his own remembrance might not be quite clear, yet he had no hesitation in accepting the second witness's

testimony as true. "But," queried one of the Commissioners, in effect, "how can you be so certain? For you admit that you hardly know Mr. ——" "That is so," replied Mr. Raikes, "but then, you see, I know Mr. Salisbury very well."

It is unnecessary to dwell at any length upon the proceedings, which lasted for several weeks; but it cannot be denied that the revelations made amply justified the Commissioners in coming to the conclusion that malpractices had existed to a sufficiently large extent to compel them to resort to drastic treatment. The disgrace attaching to the disfranchisement of not only a number of leading citizens, but of the city itself, was keenly felt by both parties. This was particularly the case in the ranks of the Conservatives, who considered that they had been more hardly dealt with in proportion to their offences than their opponents, who had undoubtedly gone about their work in the more systematic manner of the two, as their admittedly larger expenditure and their unblushing employment of a "milch cow" and a "man in the moon" conclusively proved. This feeling was stimulated by the belief that mistakes had crept into the Report itself. The Conservative agent drew up a paper indicating eight alleged errors, of which I give one (the most important) instance—

"3. (Page xiii.)—'The sum expended on this election by the Liberal party was £5000, and £3900 by the Conservatives.'

"*Correction.*—'The sum expended by the Liberals, as proved in evidence, was £6191 12s., of which £2857 was

corruptly expended ; the sum expended by the Conservatives was £3843 13s. 7d., of which £718 was corrupt. This could only be verified by going through the Blue Book, which the writer has done.' ”

If the agent was correct in his figures, which I do not pretend to assert, the Conservatives had indubitably just cause for complaint, for, according to this calculation, their total proved expenditure was less than two-thirds of that of their opponents, while the amount corruptly spent by the Conservatives was barely equal to one-fourth of that expended by the Liberals. Nevertheless, but slight difference was made in the punishment meted out. It is, however, hardly credible that a competent and impartial tribunal could have made so grave a blunder as the admission of these figures would imply.

CHAPTER XV.

ALTHOUGH the year 1880 was disastrous to Mr. Raikes, in a Parliamentary sense, it brought with it some minor compensations.

On March 11 it was intimated to him, through Mr. Montagu Corry, that the honour of a Privy Councillorship was to be conferred upon him.

On March 18 he went to Windsor to be sworn in, and in a letter written to his son Henry on the 21st, he gives the following brief account of the ceremony :—

“I went to Windsor on Thursday to kiss the Queen’s hand and to be sworn in. Her Majesty looked very well and I got through the ceremony, not indeed without something of a thrill, but still, I hope, without making any conspicuous blunder. We lunched with the Ministers and Ladies of the Court, and Lord Beaconsfield was very kind and friendly.”

It is interesting to note that Mr. Raikes had not reached his forty-second birthday at the time when he was the recipient of this honour, for it has fallen to the lot of few politicians to be admitted to the Council at so early an age.

About two months later Mr. Raikes was elected a Bencher of his Inn, the Middle Temple, a token of appreciation which he valued very highly.

His opportunities of active Parliamentary work during 1880 were naturally circumscribed, but shortly before the close of the Session, on March 9, he brought forward a resolution in favour of giving compensation to railway servants injured in the performance of their duty. It was worded as follows:—

“That the exceptional character of the services performed and dangers incurred by railway servants in the discharge of their duty, calls for the immediate and special attention of her Majesty’s Government ; and this House is of opinion that a change in the law is required, by which, notwithstanding the legal doctrine of Common Employment, adequate compensation shall be secured to railway servants in all cases of injury to which they have not personally contributed.”

Mr. Raikes, who was closely in touch with the large number of railway men resident in Chester, had made various efforts to get the matter ventilated in a more practical form, without success. He urged, however, on this occasion, in the course of a lucid speech, that a case had been made out for establishing a system by which railway servants (or their representatives in fatal cases), where they personally had not contributed to loss of life or injury to limb, should be entitled to receive from the company a certain sum, to be fixed at a maximum by Parliament, and to be assessed in cases of injury by a competent arbitrator. He also suggested that greater facilities should be afforded to the men for insurance—

“For,” he said, “if you could establish such a system, by which, without an expensive course of proceedings and

without having recourse to hungry attorneys, you would provide an expeditious remedy in cases of death and injury, and if you use that as the centre of a system by which you encourage habits of thrift, economy, and providence, I think you would go a long way towards solving one of the most difficult problems with which we have to deal."

Members in general were, however, too much occupied in preparing for the approaching election to take much interest in the resolution, and, apart from this, Mr. Raikes was too far in advance of his time in thus advocating an inroad upon the doctrine of Common Employment (which has not been seriously threatened until comparatively recent years) to obtain much support. The resolution was seconded by Mr. Hall, and opposed by Sir E. Watkin, and the proceedings terminated in a "count."

Mr. Raikes's abrupt exit from political life naturally caused a complete upheaval of most of his plans and aspirations. He set to work, however, with characteristic energy to effect a re-entry, but though he was not favoured by fortune in this respect until early in 1882, he was not entirely shut out from the deliberations of the party which, as the following letter shows, was anxious to avail itself of his tried capacity for organization—

"June 2, 1880,

"10, Charles Street, Berkeley Square.

"MY DEAR RAIKES,

"We have been sorry that you could not attend our meetings during the past few days, but we cannot afford to part with you on that account; and your assistance will be most valuable when we come to consider, as I hope we shall

in a few days, the recommendations we should make for the constitution of a Central Office.

“Yours sincerely,

“W. H. SMITH.”

The party itself, at this time, was somewhat demoralized by the Liberal victory, and its members were quarrelling among themselves with no small vigour. The Central Office and the National Union, in particular, were at loggerheads, and Mr. Raikes's connection with the latter body soon drew him into the fray. It is hardly necessary to enter into the causes and merits of the dispute, but it may briefly be said that the National Union contended that Mr. Gorst, as party manager, aimed at absolute autocracy, and that if permitted to follow his course unchecked the Union itself would sink into insignificance, and become entirely dependent upon an official who was strongly suspected of being unfavourable to its existence.

Mr. Gorst, on his part, took up the position that, as party manager, he must be allowed an entirely free hand, and that all important questions relating to organization and funds must be entrusted to his discretion.

Eventually the affair ended in a compromise, whereby the National Union retained its independence, and Mr. Gorst his dignity—and the control of the party funds.

Although busily engaged in passing in review the various possible Parliamentary openings which presented themselves, and in other business of a more

personal nature, Mr. Raikes found time to take an active part in inaugurating the first Old Salopian dinner, which was held on June 9, with the then Archbishop of York in the chair. He also attended the celebration of the Sunday-School Centenary at Gloucester, on the 29th of the same month, and witnessed the unveiling of the statue erected in honour of his great-granduncle, Robert Raikes, the founder of Sunday Schools, by Lord Shaftesbury.

But the most pressing matter which Mr. Raikes had to face, was the diminution of his income entailed by the loss of his post as Chairman of Committees. Although his own tastes were simple in the extreme, his large family was a considerable and ever-growing source of expense, and under the circumstances of the case, his private means were insufficient to enable him to maintain the position he had gained in the social and political world.

In the first instance, he was attracted by the Chair of the Civil Service Commission, but the post did not fall vacant before his friends went out. He then made an effort to obtain the Governorship of the Hudson Bay Company, but in this he was unsuccessful. Meanwhile, there arose a considerable demand for his services in connection with industrial enterprises, caused by his known aptitude for business, combined with his experience in controlling large assemblies. Many offers of responsible posts as chairman or trustee, were made to him, and after careful investigation, he accepted some of these, and invested the greater part of his

capital in the concerns with which he identified himself.

I only allude to these matters because in later years his connection with public companies was at times criticized by opponents and others who were, for the most part, entirely ignorant of the merits of the case, and of the fact that in the city Mr. Raikes's reputation as a sound and straightforward man of business was quite independent of his repute as a politician.

“To go into politics” with the object of making a living passes with a tolerably numerous class as entirely legitimate, if only the intention be not too openly expressed. On the other hand, the public man who supplements his income by perfectly honest and straightforward means in order that he may retain the position which he has earned in the political world, is often the victim of childish censure. His critics do not know, or if they do, are careful to hide their knowledge, that the man who undertakes such double duties, and labours at them conscientiously, has to sacrifice his leisure in favour of a life of unremitting toil and its attendant anxieties ; and often does so, not with any view to personal gain, but merely in order that he may be enabled to place his tried abilities at the service of his country.

Such a life was that of the subject of this memoir during many years ; and even when it closed, under circumstances which emphasized the silent sacrifice of health and means which had been made, the voice of ungenerous criticism was not entirely stilled.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE illness of Lord Beaconsfield cast a gloom over the spring of 1881, although it was hardly anticipated at first that it was likely to have a fatal termination. So late as April 1 Mr. Raikes, in a letter to his son Henry, said—

“Lord Beaconsfield seems to be tending, though very slowly, towards recovery, but the continuance of the cold winds makes his state still very precarious.”

Nevertheless, the end was not far off, and little more than a fortnight later the great Conservative leader breathed his last.

Mingled with the profound sorrow awakened in the hearts of Lord Beaconsfield's followers by this catastrophe, there was a feeling almost of dismay. To whom could they turn for guidance? Who was worthy to lead the party which their late Chief had practically created, and had held together for so many years?

A spirit of dim foreboding brooded over all from the highest to the lowest, and this is strikingly exemplified in the closing sentence of a letter which Mr. Raikes received from Lord Salisbury on March 28—

“I have just returned from the old Chief’s funeral. It was a very striking sight, and to me inexpressibly sad. It seems like the passing away of an epoch. What is it that lies before us?”

For a few days the question of the leadership lay in abeyance, but soon the more active spirits began to move in support of those to whom they were willing to give allegiance.

From the first Mr. Raikes never wavered. To him there was but one possible successor to Lord Beaconsfield, namely, Lord Salisbury, and he lost no opportunity of advocating his claims.

On May 9 Lord Salisbury was selected as leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords. The same evening Mr. Raikes addressed a large meeting at Salford, and towards the close of his speech alluded to the question of the general leadership, as follows:—

“I cannot conceal from myself that the times require a man of no ordinary calibre. You may remember, some of you, that in *Punch*, about the time when Lord Salisbury took the seals of the Foreign Office, there was a picture of some boys playing at football, and somebody was being put aside, and the captain said, ‘Let the strong man come to the front;’ and there was the strong man.* That expressed the sentiment of England at that moment; and I believe Mr. Gladstone said some few years ago, ‘If this country comes face to face with some very important emergency there is only one man to whom she will turn to serve her and save her, and that is Lord Salisbury.’ . . . It may not, perhaps, be known to everybody in this room, that this man, who is at the head of one of the greatest families in England,

* Viz. Lord Salisbury.

and occupies a house which compares with Windsor in magnificence, actually supported himself and his wife, for many years, by his pen. No doubt, in the iron discipline of his earlier years he learned to sympathize with the millions who toil hard for their daily bread; and I feel sure that the circumstances of his present position will not diminish his influence with the people of this country when they know that he has had to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow."

There was little doubt, at the moment, which way popular opinion tended in the party, but nevertheless, this outspoken confession of faith carried considerable weight in the district with many who were inclined to favour the selection of a commoner on general grounds.

A very important matter occupied Mr. Raikes's attention during the summer of 1881, namely, the formation of a body which subsequently became a considerable factor in the work of the Church under the name of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences. It was composed partly of clergy and partly of laity selected (as its name implies) by the various diocesan conferences. Its objects were to promote the more united action of the clergy and laity of the whole Church in friendly relation with the diocesan conferences and Convocation (at the same time strengthening the latter), and to get due consideration paid to Church measures in Parliament.

The scheme, which was of a comprehensive nature, had been mooted some years before, but until taken up in earnest by Mr. Raikes, Archdeacon Emery, and Mr. Stanley Leighton, had made little headway.

One of the first steps taken on its revival was the issue of a report embodying the main features of the proposed arrangement to the leading clergy and laymen in England and Wales; while it fell to the lot of Mr. Raikes, as Chairman of the Council, to communicate with the bishops, and to ask for their advice and support.

On the whole, the replies were of an encouraging nature, for though a certain proportion were couched in non-committal terms, only one (that of the Archbishop of York, which did not arrive until December) was absolutely unfavourable.

Amongst those who formed a high opinion of the value of the scheme were the Bishops of Winchester, Chichester, Chester, Carlisle, Bath and Wells, and Ely.

By March, 1882, the project was established on a firm basis. In the course of that month the Executive Committee was appointed, with Mr. Raikes as its Chairman, and further communications were opened with such of the bishops as still hung back from giving their approval.

From that time on, the Central Council continued to gain in weight and authority until the House of Laymen was instituted several years later; but as some description of the proceedings that then took place is given in a subsequent chapter, it is unnecessary to allude to it more fully here.

Apart from the ordinary round of business and political engagements, Mr. Raikes was much occupied

during 1881 by the affairs of the Mersey Tunnel Railway Company, of which he had been appointed Chairman.

On Saturday, October 29, the inauguration of the new works for the construction of the tunnel took place, and the Mayors of Liverpool and Birkenhead, from their respective sides of the river, started the powerful engines erected to keep the workings clear of water, and to raise to the surface the material excavated.

In the course of his speech at the dinner which followed, Mr. Raikes took the opportunity of giving some interesting information with regard to the inception of the scheme. Briefly summarized, it was to the following effect: About the year 1860 it was proposed to connect Liverpool and Birkenhead by a high-level bridge, but this project was defeated by the shipping interest, who feared that it might prove an impediment to navigation. Some five years later authority to make a tunnel was obtained, but the various schemes brought forward led to no definite result until 1879. In that year Major Isaac and other gentlemen took the work in hand. The first sod was turned in December, and, the engineering difficulties having been successfully coped with, real progress was made for the first time.

Although the scheme was brought before the public in June, 1881, the formal opening of the tunnel did not take place until January, 1886. The work of boring, though necessarily slow, was greatly accelerated

by the adoption of Colonel Beaumont's machine driven by compressed air, in 1883. On January 17, 1884, the last few feet of rock which divided the Beaumont tunnel on the Birkenhead side from the driftway on the Liverpool side were broken away in the presence of the Chairman, Major Isaac, Mr. Waddell (the contractor), Colonel Beaumont, Mr. Brunlees, the Messrs. Fox (the engineers), and others.

After mutual congratulations the Liverpool party, headed by Mr. Raikes, struggled past the boring-machine, and were thus the first to pass the river by the route by which so many thousands have since been carried.

Two years sufficed for the completion of the work, and on January 20, 1886, the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Liverpool in order to perform the ceremony of opening the tunnel for traffic. All passed off successfully, and on February 1 the line was thrown open to the public.

The Princess was graciously pleased to accept a brooch representing a section of the tunnel surrounded by diamonds as a memento of her visit, and some few months later Mr. Raikes and Major Isaac attended in order to present the gift. The interview was not devoid of amusing features. Major Isaac, who was somewhat nervous, opened the proceedings by reading a long address of congratulation, and after every pause for breath interpolated the word "madam" before resuming the thread. "This address," Mr. Raikes said afterwards, "seemed as though it were

never going to end, and when it had been in progress for some minutes the Prince was biting his lips in order to conceal his amusement." But the climax came when Mr. Raikes's turn arrived. At the first word he uttered—"Ma'am"—his colleague gave a violent start, and his obvious surprise at this exhibition of familiarity, gradually succeeded, as it was, by an expression of intense gloom which plainly betrayed inward wrestlings, was almost too much for the gravity of the rest of the party.

Mr. Raikes's attention was first turned to Preston in May, 1881, on the death of Mr. Hermon, when the Central Office inquired whether he would care to have his name brought forward. He had by this time made his ground very sure at Cambridge, and as it was expected that Mr. Walpole might resign his seat at almost any moment, he found some difficulty in making up his mind. As matters turned out, however, he was not at the moment driven to make an absolute choice, for the Preston delegates, when they came to see Mr. Gorst, informed him that they had practically decided upon a local candidate, in the person of Mr. Ecroyd. They added that if they had had to look outside, there was no one whom they would have preferred to Mr. Raikes; and that this was no mere empty expression of civility was proved the following year.

In November the representation of Cambridge University appeared to be almost within his grasp. It was thought that Mr. Walpole was likely to vacate

his seat immediately, in consequence of the local unpopularity of the scheme of the Commissioners with which he was closely identified ; and on November 20 Mr. Raikes received a letter dealing fully with the situation, and describing the proceedings at a meeting of some of the principal leaders of University opinion, at which his correspondent, Mr. A. K. Miller, was present. After discussing the probabilities of a vacancy, the meeting proceeded to select a candidate in order to be ready for immediate action.

“ I proposed you,” wrote Mr. Miller ; “ remarking on the importance of your being in the House next Session, on your connection with the Central Committee of the Conservative Associations, with the Church Defence Institution and the Council of Diocesan Conferences, and on your strength with the moderate clergy and Church laity. . . . The President of Queen’s said he thought we could not possibly have a better candidate, and it speedily appeared that we were unanimous, and that every one had come with the intention of supporting you.”

As a matter of fact, Mr. Walpole did not, at the moment, entertain the views attributed to him, and although some of Mr. Raikes’s supporters were anxious to acquaint their senior member with their wishes, it was felt on all hands that no step must be taken which would involve the slightest risk of hurting his feelings, or of making him imagine that he was out of touch with any considerable body of his constituents. Mr. Raikes himself, anxious though he was to grasp the prize which appeared to be so nearly within his reach, would, I think, sooner have given up all hopes of

realizing his ambition than have inflicted one moment's pain upon his old friend.

And so matters drifted on until January, 1882, when Mr. Raikes was given the opportunity of entering Parliament, as member for Preston, on the elevation of Sir John Holker to the Bench. The offer was contained in the following letter:—

“Preston, January 10, 1882.

“DEAR SIR,

“It being almost certain that a vacancy will occur in the representation of our borough in Parliament, owing to Sir John Holker accepting a judgeship, I have been requested to ask you if you will consent to offer your services as a candidate, if invited by the party. Considering the glorious majority (1664) by which Mr. Ecroyd was returned at the last election, I am *certain* of *your* return.

“Yours most truly,

“WILLIAM P. PARK (Chairman).”

The door was now open, and Mr. Raikes had to decide upon his course with short space for reflection. In his heart he was determined that, come what might, he would not renounce his claim to the University seat. Sooner than do that he was prepared to refuse Preston or any other opening that might present itself.

But was it necessary to do so? Mr. Walpole had as yet made no sign, and it was rumoured that he intended to hold his seat till the next General Election, which might not take place for some years. Assurances, too, were forthcoming from the right quarter that Mr. Raikes might regard himself as untrammelled,

and that, whatever his position when the University seat fell vacant, the first offer of it would be made to him.

So far, then, as Cambridge was concerned, he might accept the offer without hesitation.

But what was his position in regard to Preston? A conditional acceptance would not, he felt sure, be entertained, and would, in fact, be regarded as tantamount to a refusal. It would have the additional demerit of admitting the world in general into his confidence; and there were other aspirants to the University seat of at least equal weight with himself in the party, who would at once be enabled to take active steps in support of their own interests and in opposition to his.

By a refusal he would place himself, perhaps for years, outside Parliament, where at this juncture his presence was earnestly needed in view of the special legislation which was about to be brought forward. Further, it was impossible for him to ignore the fact that any prolongation of his absence from the political stage was bound to prove detrimental to his own personal aspirations.

In view of the whole of the circumstances he felt that his wisest course would be to accept the proffered invitation, and to be guided in his subsequent course by the turn of events. If, as seemed probable, Mr. Walpole were to determine to retain his seat until the General Election, few difficulties would arise; for it was hardly a secret that a certain prominent member

of the party was anxious, when occasion offered, to migrate to Preston, and this fact afforded an easy basis for a settlement.

It was true that this same gentleman was also spoken of as a possible candidate for University honours ; but as matters stood, Mr. Raikes had little reason to fear effective interference in that quarter.

Again, if Mr. Walpole were to resign his seat unexpectedly, Mr. Raikes felt that he need have no hesitation in leaving Preston. The position there was quite secure, and there could be no lack of men able and willing to come forward and take his place. Some soreness there would be, undoubtedly, especially in the quarter already alluded to, for his rival would see himself cut off both from Preston and from Cambridge at one blow, and would, no doubt, throw every possible difficulty in his path. But Mr. Raikes was the last man in the world to be turned from his course merely by fear of opposition.

Hardly had Mr. Raikes been adopted as their candidate by the bulk of the Conservative party in Preston, when an entirely new difficulty arose. The supporters of Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson, the president of the Preston Working-men's Club, and a gentleman of considerable local influence, insisted upon pushing his claims.

Mr. Tomlinson himself announced that he was entirely in the hands of his friends, and would come forward if they desired him to do so. The position rapidly developed into a deadlock. The majority of

the Conservatives supported Mr. Raikes; but Mr. Tomlinson's following was sufficiently large to make it almost certain that if both went to the poll the Liberals would be able to bring in a nominee of their own, or by casting in their lot with Mr. Tomlinson, to ensure the defeat of the official Conservative candidate. In either event the unity of the local organization would be destroyed for some time to come.

Eventually an appeal was made to head-quarters, and Mr. Tomlinson had an interview with Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Gorst. Neither of these gentlemen took a very strong line, but on January 20 Sir Stafford wrote to Mr. Raikes to say that he had urged "that, at the present moment, and looking to the prospects of the next Session, it was of very great importance to bring you in."

Four days later Mr. Tomlinson announced his withdrawal from the contest, in consequence of "the desire expressed by the leaders of the Conservative party, that at this conjuncture there should be no division, and that Mr. Raikes should be put in a position to take part in the forthcoming discussion of the rules of the House of Commons," and concluded with the request that his friends would cordially support Mr. Raikes.

The excellent grace with which Mr. Tomlinson renounced his claims when he learned that Mr. Raikes's services were required for the benefit of the party as a whole, earned for him the undivided respect

of the Preston Conservatives, which stood him in good stead later in the year.

For some reason there was considerable delay in the issue of the Writ. This gave the Liberals, who had been hugging themselves upon the position of affairs in the Tory camp, time to settle upon their course after Mr. Tomlinson's retirement had dashed their earlier hopes. The names of Mr. Watts and Mr. Ayrton were mentioned in the first instance; but eventually the Liberal Association determined not to run an official candidate. Mr. Simpson "of Liverpool" was, however, good enough to step into the breach on "purity principles." His only previous appearance had been as a "Liberal-Conservative" at Liverpool, in 1874, when he figured at the bottom of the poll. On this occasion, although defeated, he polled practically the full Liberal strength, obtaining 4212 votes, as against 4340 recorded in favour of Mr. Thompson, the official candidate, when opposed to Mr. Ecroyd the previous year.

On his part Mr. Raikes secured 41 votes more than were cast for the successful Conservative in 1881, and thus raised the majority from 1664 to 1833.

The poll was declared on February 2, and the result evoked much enthusiasm.

After fulfilling a political engagement of long standing at Hereford, Mr. Raikes turned his steps towards home, where he was received by the people of Mold with much cordiality. On his arrival at the station he was met by a deputation, which comprised

in its ranks members of both political parties, and was presented with an address, which, in its concluding words, bore witness to his popularity in the district. The last sentence ran—

“ You see around you neighbours of all shades of opinions—Liberals and Conservatives, Churchmen and Dissenters—and we all most heartily congratulate you upon your success, and wish you long life, happiness, and prosperity.”

The Council of the National Union also paid Mr. Raikes the compliment of passing a resolution congratulating him upon his brilliant victory.

Lord Salisbury wrote—

“ You must forgive me for writing a line to say how heartily I congratulate you and the party on your return to the House of Commons. You must have had an anxious quarter of an hour—but it was a splendid poll.”

But perhaps the quaintest of many congratulations was contained in a letter from his brother-in-law, the Rev. Digby S. Wrangham. The passage in question ran—

“ A Right Honourable who is not an M.P. always, as I tell Agnes, reminds me of a teapot with a *handle* but without a *spout*. Having secured the latter important appendage, may you pour forth abundance of the liquid eloquence that so valuable a ‘vessel’ should do—hot and strong!”

The *Morning Post* gave expression to the sentiment generally aroused by Mr. Raikes’s return to active service, in the following words:—

“ We are very glad, irrespective of the Conservative triumph, that Mr. Raikes has again been enabled to enter the walls of St. Stephen’s, from which he has been greatly

missed during the last two years. His re-election occurs at a peculiarly auspicious moment, when it is generally understood that the Ministry intend to propose a radical alteration in our whole system of Parliamentary debate, and one which, if agreed to by the House of Commons, would practically render discussion a farce and free speech an empty name. Mr. Raikes has presided over deliberations of the Legislature during Sessions of as stormy a character as anything that the last two years have witnessed, and will be able to give the House the benefit of his great and varied experience of obstruction in all its varied moods, whether as practised by the Parnellites, the independent members of the Liberal party below the gangway, or the front bench during the six Sessions the late Parliament lasted. His election is a decided rebuke to the proposed *clôture*, or gagging policy, as well as a condemnation of all that the present Government have done, whether at home or abroad, during the last two years."

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. RAIKES took his seat at the opening of Parliament in 1882, and formed one of the majority of 286, which again asserted that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted "to go through the form of repeating the words of the oath." He did not, however, take any very active part until the debate on the new rules came on, and in a letter to his mother, on February 27, he remarked—

"I have not yet quite pulled myself together after my Preston fatigues, but the recovery of the old work is, I think, doing me good, though it is a bore to be walking about incessantly with a speech to deliver on the *clôture*, which is incessantly postponed."

The hoped-for opportunity did not arrive until March 20, but the delay does not appear to have detracted from the merit of the speech, which was admitted on all hands to be a valuable and luminous contribution to the debate.

For some weeks affairs in the House dragged on wearily, and on April 29 Mr. Raikes wrote to his mother—

"We have been merely counting time in the House of Commons ever since we met. The next great excitement for me is a prospective debate next Thursday, on the late Chester

election. . . . You will be sorry to hear that the Preston expenses have amounted to the terrible total of £1940, to which not one farthing has been locally subscribed, and only £100 from outside."

But the period of calm was not destined to last for long.

The opening of May was marked by the resignation of Mr. Forster, Chief Secretary for Ireland, in consequence of the determination of the Government to release the imprisoned Irish M.P.'s. The Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Cowper, took the same course upon similar grounds.

In political circles excitement rose to fever heat, and before it had time to cool, the Phœnix Park murders plunged the whole of Europe into consternation.

In the ferment of the moment little attention was paid to Mr. Stanhope's Church Patronage Bill, which was debated on May 2, and characterized by Mr. Raikes as a half-hearted measure which only nibbled at the abuse of the transfer of patronage for pecuniary considerations.

The spirit of unrest continued to hover over the country throughout the summer, for in addition to the troubles in Ireland, matters had drifted into a very dangerous position in Egypt. The massacre at Alexandria in June, whereby six hundred Europeans lost their lives, was followed by the historic bombardment on the 11th of the following month. This proceeding, in spite of Mr. Gladstone's assertion that we were not at war with any one, cost the Government

the services of Mr. John Bright, to whose penchant for peace at any price we no doubt, to some extent, owe the cession of the Transvaal to the Boers in the previous year, an act of weakness which, since that time, has so often embroiled this country in South Africa.

Affairs were further complicated during the first week of July by the defeat of the Government upon a clause in the Crimes Bill relating to domiciliary visits, and it was expected in many quarters that they would seek escape from their difficulties by resignation. But Mr. Gladstone, in spite of the gaps created in his Cabinet by the death or defection of some of his ablest colleagues, held on his course. Nevertheless, although the Session was unduly prolonged, it was found impossible to finish the business in hand, and it was eventually decided to meet again in November in order to confirm the *clôture* resolutions.

Although Mr. Raikes took no part in the Bradlaugh debate at the commencement of the Session, he held very strong views upon the question. In April he had an opportunity of dealing with the subject at Liverpool. He arrived on the 11th, and stayed with Lord Lathom, who was entertaining Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote, for the great Conservative demonstration which was to be held on the two following days. The occasion in question was a dinner given in honour of the Preston victory by the members of the Liverpool Junior Conservative Club.

In the course of his speech Mr. Raikes commented

very severely upon the attitude of the Government in respect of Mr. Bradlaugh, and gave point to the anomalous position occupied by them by the following comparison :—

“ You may have heard of a story told some years ago, and I believe Sydney Smith was the first person who gave currency to it, reflecting upon the character of the then Archbishop of Canterbury. Somebody had said that the Archbishop had violated the oath he had taken in assuming his see (in which he promised to maintain the emoluments and dignities of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury), when he lent himself to a proposition to knock off, in the future, half the capitular body. It was, however, contended that that could not touch his conscience, because he had only taken the oath by proxy, and in consequence, the Archbishop stood scathless, while the unfortunate proctor was bound to bear future penalties of the violated oath, if the oath was violated.

“ It seems to me that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues have taken that story to heart. They stand by and lead you clearly to understand that Mr. Bradlaugh is a very shocking, very wicked, very dreadful man. If he takes an oath in which he does not believe, he is committing an act of the most scandalous profanity, and if her Majesty’s Government allows him to do so it is perfectly free from any possible charge of complicity of this kind. I fancy that is not an attitude which, although it may suit a casuistic chancellor, will commend itself to the robust judgment of the English people.”

In September Mr. Raikes, with his wife and eldest daughter, attended Preston Guild Merchant, a function held every twenty years with great pomp and ceremony. The earliest record of it dates back to the year 1329, the time of Edward III. The Duke and

Duchess of Albany graced the proceedings with their presence on this occasion, and trade processions, concerts, and balls filled out the week, which concluded with a Review on the last day.

This was, I think, the last visit paid by Mr. Raikes to Preston in his capacity of member for that city.

There had been several false alarms about Cambridge from time to time. At one period it was asserted that Mr. Walpole would certainly withdraw from public life in June, and it was further reported that Mr. Gorst's claims were being considered in certain quarters.

Matters, nevertheless, remained in *statu quo* till October, when, towards the end of the month, Mr. Walpole informed the local party leaders that he definitely intended to retire in the course of a few days. At Mr. Raikes's request he consented to defer the final step for a short time, in order that the former might place his leaders in possession of the exact state of affairs.

Although Mr. Raikes's friends had everything in readiness for a contest, the secret had been well kept, and there is little doubt that the party leaders were somewhat chagrined when they discovered how strong his position was. They had, doubtless, imagined that his aspirations to the "blue riband" of Parliament had sunk into abeyance after his election for Preston, and regarded the seat about to be vacated as practically in their gift.

Mr. Gorst's name was again brought prominently

forward, and pressure was put upon Mr. Raikes in order to prevent him leaving Preston.

His mind was, however, too firmly made up to brook interference with his plans, and on November 2 he addressed the following letter to the chairman of his Preston Committee :—

“ DEAR MR. PARK,

“It is not without very real regret that I write to inform you of my intention very shortly to resign the seat for Preston which I had the great honour to obtain in February last.

“For many years, indeed, I may say, ever since I began public life, it has been my ambition to represent the University of Cambridge, and so far back as 1867 I found many supporters there, who have remained faithful to their choice ever since.

“I learn that it is now the intention of Mr. Walpole to retire from the representation of the University almost immediately, and though the Conservative candidate will not be formally chosen until a few days after his announcement of this intention, I have every reason to believe that I shall be invited to offer myself for the seat.

“There is no other offer that could tempt me to leave Preston. But I trust that, if I accept the invitation to take what is considered the ‘blue riband’ of the House of Commons, I shall not be thought to slight a constituency which I should prefer to any other borough or county in the kingdom.

“I feel satisfied that the generous and cordial spirit which prevailed in the Conservative ranks nine months ago, will again secure a victory for the party as signal as you then achieved.

“May I venture to express a hope that in view of the paramount importance of preserving union, the fact of Mr.

Tomlinson's retirement last February may be taken as a circumstance in his favour, and that his claims may be thoroughly and carefully considered by those who control the party.

"I shall, of course, issue an address, probably about the end of next week, bidding farewell to the constituency. Will you, however, be kind enough meanwhile to convey to my more intimate friends my sincere thanks, as well as my regret in parting from them.

"Yours very truly,

"HENRY CECIL RAIKES."

As soon as the party managers realized that Mr. Raikes's determination was not to be shaken by ordinary methods, they decided on taking an extreme step. Mr. Walpole was formally requested to further postpone his proposed resignation, and the following letter was addressed to Mr. Raikes :—

"Conservative Central Office, November 3, 1882.

"MY DEAR RAIKES,

"We have been considering the very serious condition of affairs at Preston, and we have found it necessary to ask Mr. Walpole to delay, for a short interval, his retirement in order to give some little time to our Preston friends to consider the course they should take. You owe something to Preston, and I hope you will do what you can to assist the party there to settle the very serious differences which the circumstances have created.

"I send you a copy of our letter to Mr. Walpole.

"Yours very sincerely,

"W. H. SMITH."

With the information at his disposal, it was easy enough for Mr. Raikes (as it seemed to him) to read between the lines of this letter. The view he took

may be summed up as follows : Although no direct allusion was made to the representation of Cambridge in Mr. Smith's communication, the Central Committee undoubtedly had their own ideas on the subject, and had they not been forestalled by the promptitude of Mr. Raikes's action, would have taken steps to enforce them. As matters stood, their only chance lay in interposing delay. If successful in this, they might have been able, by bringing pressure to bear all round, to secure sufficient backing to justify them in launching an official candidate. Then if, in spite of this, Mr. Raikes still persisted in leaving Preston, he would find himself confronted with a very real difficulty ; and would have to choose between facing a struggle with a member of his own party, endowed with all the prestige attaching to the official candidate, and abandoning his University aspirations, and with them Parliamentary life, at least, for some years to come. If this position could be brought about it might well give him pause.

Though fully alive to the danger that threatened him, he remained unshaken in his determination, and although highly indignant at this attempt to embarrass his movements, never dreamt for one moment of surrender. If his leaders resolved to proceed to extremities, he, confident in the strength of his own position, was fully prepared to meet them.

So far as Preston was concerned, their appeal amounted, in his opinion, to little more than a confession that there, too, the Central body were, for the

moment, unable to put forward the candidate of their choice. For, though it has never been questioned that any member, whose seat is moderately safe, is within his rights in leaving his constituency under the special circumstances of an invitation to sit for one of the Universities, the unwritten rule does not apply to ordinary cases, and the politician who desires to change an uncertainty for a certainty has generally to curb his longings until a General Election furnishes a convenient opportunity.

Mr. Raikes was well aware that no question would have been raised as to the propriety of the party nominee relinquishing his seat if invited to Cambridge, and also that it was idle to suggest that Preston was likely to be lost because the authorities were not in a position to permit the man they favoured to accept the offer of standing for it. The arguments of the Central Office, therefore, bore little weight with him, as he regarded them as intended merely to cover action, whereby it was hoped to deprive him of the prize for which he had toiled and waited so long.

His natural indignation at this treatment was not lessened by the receipt of the following letter from Mr. Balfour, who, in virtue of his position, was obliged to yield to the pressure put upon him, and to withdraw his promised support :—

“Carlton Club, November 3, 1882.

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Since I saw you this morning the question of the vacancy for Preston, which will result from your standing for

Cambridge, has come up before the Central Committee. The Committee are so strongly of opinion that an immediate election for that borough would, at the moment, be injurious to the interests of the party, that they are unwilling that I, who am a member of the Committee, should appear to have promoted it by allowing my name to be printed on the list of your Cambridge Committee. I am very sorry that this should be so ; but I do not see how, under the circumstances, I can do otherwise than comply with their request.

“The situation is an awkward one for me ; but I console myself by thinking that you will appreciate my motive, and will not suffer in your electioneering prospects by my defection.

“Yours truly,

“ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

“P.S.—If my name *is* printed on your committee list, would you kindly have it erased ? ”

The Central Committee, no doubt, felt that they had taken effectual steps to curb Mr. Raikes's independence, but if so, they must have been somewhat rudely undeceived by his reply. In it are blended both anger and defiance, while the contempt with which their flimsy arguments are tossed aside must have assured them that their correspondent had the game in his own hands, and was perfectly well aware of it :—

“ 11, Chapel Street, November 4.

“DEAR SMITH,

“ I suppose I ought to acknowledge your communication of yesterday, accompanied by Mr. Balfour's letter written at your request. I would much rather forbear to comment upon these letters at all. But, in order to protect myself, I feel bound to say that the course taken by your committee appears to have been based upon very imperfect

knowledge of the facts of the case, as well as upon a strange misconception of your own functions and of what is due to one member of the party from another. I am not likely to forget that I owe something to Preston, but having regard to the exceptional difficulties, certainly not of my own creation, with which I had to contend there, as well as to the heavy financial burden which I was left to bear alone, it would be well to remember that the party owes much more to me.

“I will only further point out that it was at my request that Mr. Walpole consented to postpone his resignation from the first day of the Session, when he originally intended it to take effect ; that I seized the first opportunity when Parliament met of informing you of the exact state of things both at Cambridge and Preston, and that it is solely due to the negligence of your own committee if the necessary arrangements have not been made for securing to the Conservative majority at Preston the seat which you will find it very difficult to lose.

“It is, I suppose, an axiom in electioneering that the shorter the notice of a vacancy the less is the risk of a split in the party.

“I have written to Mr. Walpole to disclaim any participation in an interference with his action, which I believe to be unprecedented and unwarrantable.

“I remain, yours very faithfully,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

This letter probably convinced the leading spirits on the Council that there was little to be gained by pushing matters to extremes, for although Mr. Walpole placed himself in their hands, they put no further obstacle in Mr. Raikes's way.

Mr. Walpole issued his farewell letter on November 7 ; on the 9th Mr. Raikes was formally adopted as candidate in his place ; and on the 10th his Address

to the members of the Senate was printed. Lists of his London and Cambridge committees were published simultaneously, Lord John Manners (the Duke of Rutland) being chairman of the former, and the Hon. and Rev. Latimer Neville, Master of Magdalene, of the latter. Day by day these lists were swelled by the addition of fresh names, and it soon became evident that Mr. Raikes had behind him a very large majority of those who represented all that was best of University opinion. On the 14th Mr. Raikes issued his farewell address to the electors of Preston, and on the following day applied for the Chiltern Hundreds.

Meanwhile Preston, as anticipated, had fixed her affections on Mr. Gorst as Mr. Raikes's successor, but he found himself unable to come forward. In default, Mr. Hanbury found some supporters, but the matter ended, as it well might have begun, in the selection of Mr. Tomlinson, who thus reaped the reward of his self-sacrifice earlier in the year.

As most of my readers probably are aware, voting at the University election is not by ballot, and the electors are not compelled to attend in person in order to exercise their suffrages. All that is necessary for them to do is to fill in the voting-paper sent to them, with their own name and that of the candidate they desire to support, and to forward it as directed. The poll is kept open for some days, and at its close poll-books are published showing how each individual vote has been cast.

From this it will be seen that it is of great importance to the candidate to be in possession of a full and accurate list of the names and addresses of the graduates who are entitled to vote.

Although the official list formed a very tolerable guide, Mr. Raikes was of opinion that with care and attention it might be considerably supplemented and rectified so far as actual addresses were concerned, and he had arranged for this work to be taken in hand some six months previously. His attached friend, the late Mr. Walker Baily, cheerfully undertook the task, and, far from dropping it when the election was won, carried it on from year to year with a system and minuteness which resulted in a degree of accuracy being reached such as probably had never before been attained. It was a real labour of love, and Mr. Baily felt himself fully rewarded when weeks of patient research resulted in the addition of a few previously untraced addresses to what he described as his "great work."

The Conservatives were, then, fully prepared for action when it was announced, on November 14, that Professor Stuart would take the field in the Liberal interest.

The poll opened on November 23, and closed on the 28th. The proceedings were not marked by any particular degree of interest, for, though Professor Stuart was personally popular, Mr. Raikes early secured a commanding lead, which increased day by day. The Conservatives eventually carried the seat

by a majority of 2192, the figures reading: Raikes 3494, Stuart 1302. It may be noted, too, that the latter did not succeed in gaining a majority amongst the members of even one college. However, since that day he has been fortunate in finding a more appreciative, if less intellectual, constituency.

This was the first contest which had taken place since the election of 1868, when two Conservatives opposed each other, and Mr. Beresford Hope carried the day against Mr. Cleasby.

Towards the close of the poll letters of congratulation began to stream in, and in all Mr. Raikes received between two and three thousand of these missives.

Shortly after the determination of the Cambridge contest, several of those who had up to that time been responsible for the management of the party threw up the reins, and Mr. Raikes, prompted no doubt by his own experiences, wrote to Lord Salisbury in order to urge the necessity of putting matters on a more satisfactory footing, and in due course received the following reply:—

“ December 12, 1882.

“ MY DEAR RAIKES,

“ I very much wish I had a chance of seeing you in the manner you propose. But we have been ordered to the Riviera for the health of one of my children; and we start on Friday, the 15th.

“ The organization of the party is indeed ‘acephalous’ at this moment. Northcote on board a yacht, Stanhope *en route* to join him, Gorst and Smith resigned—let us hope there will not be many bye-elections during the holidays.

Anyhow, I should be of little service, as, for obvious reasons, I have carefully kept aloof from matters exclusively concerning the House of Commons.

“Ever yours very truly,

“SALISBURY.”

“Your majority was a splendid one, but I am afraid that it contributed to make our friend in Liverpool over-confident.”

Upon the whole, Mr. Raikes could look back upon the year 1882 with considerable satisfaction. Although many anxieties and vexations had beset his path, the events which occurred during the latter part of the year made ample amends. The strain upon his system, and the serious inroad upon his resources involved by two contested elections within nine months, were, like the quarrel thrust upon him by the action of some of his colleagues, almost forgotten in the realization of one of his most cherished ambitions. Indeed, his success would, I think, have been robbed of half its sweetness had it not been attained in the teeth of difficulties.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN 1883 the fortunes of the Conservative party had fallen to a low ebb. Its leaders in the House appeared to have sunk into a condition of apathy, while the resignation of its chief managers was in itself regarded as a tacit confession of failure.

The function of an Opposition is, it is commonly assumed, to oppose, but, with the exception of their stand on the Bradlaugh question, Sir Stafford Northcote and his leading colleagues showed themselves unequal to coping with Mr. Gladstone, and seemed inclined to abandon themselves to a policy of drift. While unable or unwilling to make opportunities for themselves, they even proved incapable of taking advantage of those furnished by the Government's blunders.

Not unnaturally, their hold upon their supporters relaxed, and a general spirit of despondency began gradually to permeate the rank and file. Murmurs were heard here and there, indicative of a mutinous spirit, but the majority merely lost heart, and came to regard the spectacle of their leaders being ever drawn at Mr. Gladstone's chariot-wheels as a perfectly natural arrangement. A few bold spirits were even now ripe

for revolt, but they were rendered powerless by the apathy of their fellows.

Mr. Raikes, who had viewed the decadence of his party with grave concern, was constant in his efforts to reinfuse life into the corpse of Conservatism.

Although he chafed at the timidity of his leaders in the House of Commons, he did not ally himself with the little band of conspirators who eventually accomplished their overthrow. His confidence in Lord Salisbury was unabated; and though he foresaw that certain changes would be necessary, he desired to have them effected gradually and without any open rupture. His one aim was to benefit the party as a whole, and with this object in view he worked untiringly.

While urging upon his leaders the advisability of entirely reorganizing the system of management in vogue, he was even more insistent upon the necessity of showing a bolder front, both in Parliament and throughout the country, than they had done for some time.

His views upon the Parliamentary duties of the Opposition will be found recorded in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, 1883.* Of this article Mr. Gibson (Lord Ashbourne) wrote—

* The following passages give a fairly clear idea of the line taken by Mr. Raikes in the article referred to, which was entitled "The Functions of an Opposition."

" . . . It will follow from this that a party in Opposition will be always ready to do battle with the Ministry of the day, not merely upon those great issues which are fraught with momentous consequences to the State, but also whenever it may find a fair and legitimate opportunity of

“It is, on the whole, a most valuable contribution to our political literature. I anticipate for next Session constant opportunities for the kind of criticism you advocate, but it will need close work and close attention and attendance.”

But it is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Raikes did not confine his efforts to mere expostulations. While urging his leaders to take steps to revive the prestige of the party, he himself laboured hard to extend its influence in all possible directions, at the same time seizing every opportunity for criticism of and assault upon his opponents on the platform and in the Press.

In 1882 he allied himself with Mr. Alfred Austin, who in addition to his poetical gifts is possessed of marked business capacity, in a scheme for starting a new magazine, with the object of “bringing the intellectual forces of Conservatism to bear upon the country.” An integral part of the arrangement was

exhibiting to the country such powers as it may possess, and of training in the practice of Parliamentary dialectic those who are to be its champions in the competition for the service of the State.”

“ . . . A passive attitude, if permanently maintained, must tend to disorganize forces, which can only be kept in heart by such successes as the blunders of any minister must frequently put within the reach of his opponents.”

“If we grant, then, that the general attitude of those who sit on the left of the Speaker should rather be one of expectancy than of aggression, we must not be supposed to admit that where the policy of the Government gives an opening for such an exposure as may excite indignation out-of-doors, the occasion should be lost. Such an occasion, in the opinion of many on both sides of the House, was afforded by a celebrated incident in the history of last year” (the promulgation of the Kilmainham correspondence). “And it was allowed to pass with a mere desultory discussion, which showed that the professed critics of the Ministry were really more frightened than elated by the unusual chance of displaying their fighting qualities.”

the formation of a club "in the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century signification of the term," the members of which were to supply the necessary literary matter.

These proposals were both carried into effect in March, 1883. The club was christened the "Cecil," after Lord Salisbury (though Mr. Raikes always liked to consider himself its unofficial godfather), and had the late Lord Lytton for its first president. It is still a flourishing, though somewhat select institution.

The first number of the *National Review*, of which Mr. Austin and Mr. Courthorpe were the joint editors, while Mr. Balfour, Mr. Raikes, and the late Mr. Edward Stanhope filled the position of trustees, appeared about the same time.

Mr. Raikes was subsequently an occasional contributor to the *Review*, and an article from his pen, entitled "The Redistribution of Political Power," appeared in the second number. *Apropos*, the Very Rev. Doctor Perowne wrote—

"Your paper in the *National Review* struck me as particularly valuable, addressed, as it was, to educated men who might be supposed to work out for themselves some of the momentous questions raised in it. If I might venture on a criticism, I should say that this article was too full of thought—or rather, the thought was too much condensed. There was matter for several articles compressed into one.

"P.S.—I fear I have not said what I meant about your *National Review* article. Do you not think it might be well to expand and publish in a somewhat more popular form the very important considerations contained in it? I am sure

you will forgive the suggestion. The country is ill-informed or misinformed on the subject."

Mr. Raikes was also associated with the formation of the Constitutional Club, and of the Cambridge University Carlton Club, during 1883; while, in addition to the *National Review*, he was largely responsible for the appearance of the *Banner* in July of the same year. This latter paper was published in order "to keep in view the interests of the Church, and to support the Constitutional party in the State," and for some eight years did good work. Its first editor was Mr. Charles Mackeson, while its general direction was in the hands of the Hon. and Rev. Latimer Neville (Master of Magdalene, Cambridge), Mr. Raikes, and Mr. Stanley Leighton.

Parliament met this year on February 15, but before taking up his duties Mr. Raikes, in pursuance of the active policy which he advocated, had addressed meetings at Newbury, Leeds, and Bury.

His speech at the last-mentioned place, which was delivered on February 12, was, said the *Morning Post* in a highly laudatory article—

"In many respects the complement of that made at Leeds last Friday. Together they form a clear and comprehensive indictment of the Ministerial policy of the last three years. . . . Altogether, Mr. Raikes's able speeches . . . go a long way to make clear the issues that have to be fought out between the Government and the Opposition during the coming Session, and if the principles so well laid down by the right hon. member for the University of Cambridge are firmly insisted on by the Conservatives, so much the better for Parliament and the country at large."

As may be imagined, Mr. Raikes, busy as he generally was, was more fully occupied than usual at this period; indeed, as he mentioned incidentally in one of his letters, he had about "four times" as much work as he could do. He, nevertheless, found time to devote considerable attention to the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences (which now embraced twenty-three dioceses), in view of a threatened onslaught by Archdeacon Denison on that body, mainly on the ground that the Bishops were not represented upon it.

Although Mr. Raikes was a constant advocate of a fighting policy, he drew a very distinct line between legitimate opposition and obstruction, and early in April a resolution passed by the Junior Liberal Club at Cambridge condemning "the persistent and systematic obstruction indulged in by sections of the members of the House of Commons, for the manifest purpose of preventing urgent and beneficial legislation," and forwarded to him, gave him an opportunity of publicly repelling the charge persistently levelled at the Conservatives, whenever they asserted their independence, by their opponents.

His letter, which was reproduced in most of the papers, ran as follows:—

"House of Commons, April 9, 1883.

"DEAR SIR,

"As you have done me the honour to forward me a resolution passed by the Cambridge Junior Liberal Club on the subject of Parliamentary obstruction, I hope you will forgive me if I venture to express my regret that a body of intelligent young men should have taken the pains to

pronounce an opinion upon a matter with which they appear to be so imperfectly acquainted.

“The present is the fourteenth Session in which I have had the honour of a seat in the House of Commons, during half of which time it was my duty to preside in the Committees of the whole House, and I can, with all sincerity, assure you that I never remember any Session in which so little opposition, far less obstruction, has been offered to the measures of the Government.

“Parliament was called together a week or more after the usual time, and the debate on the Address, which was always regarded by high Constitutional authorities like Lord John Russell as the most legitimate field for challenging the policy of Ministers, was undoubtedly prolonged beyond its ordinary limits by Amendments initiated by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, the Liberal member for Carlisle, and protracted by Liberal members from Ireland. The Supplementary Estimates, raising most important questions with regard both to Egypt and Ireland, have been voted with unexampled, if not, indeed, unseemly rapidity. The first stages of the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates of the present year have passed with an ease almost unknown in recent Parliaments. The Army Annual Bill, which was, under its old nomenclature of the Mutiny Bill, the happy hunting-ground of Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Hopwood, and their associates Messrs. Parnell and Biggar, has now reached its final stage after an hour or two's debate.

“Every other important measure proposed by the Government has made all the progress desired by its authors with less expenditure of time than the experience of former Sessions could have led us to expect. And, with the exception of the Affirmation Bill, which is likely to be opposed by members of all parties who are unwilling to bow the knee to Mr. Bradlaugh and his doctrines, the Ministerial proposals seem likely to encounter as little resistance in the future as in the past days of the Session.

“It is almost a pity, then, that those who, like your members, have an opportunity of obtaining from the newspapers a tolerably accurate record of the progress of public business, should allow themselves to become the instruments of an impudent mendacity which seeks, by discrediting the House of Commons (in which there exists at present an immense Liberal majority), to promote an agitation which is only too likely to endanger the Constitutional liberties of our country.

“I have the honour to remain

“Your very faithful servant,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

To the general public this letter appeared merely a spirited vindication of a party wrongfully accused of obstruction, but a phrase here and there—such, for instance, as “the Ministerial proposals seem likely to encounter as little resistance in the future as in the past days of the Session”—seems to point to the conclusion that what little faith in the ability of his leaders to hold their own in the House of Commons remained to Mr. Raikes was rapidly ebbing away.

There was a slight rally when the Affirmation Bill came on in May, and the measure was rejected by three votes. Beyond this, the Session presented few features of interest. Towards the close Mr. Raikes took an active part in the Corrupt Practices Bill, introduced by the Attorney-General. He proposed various amendments to this measure, one of which—a suggested limitation of the time during which a candidate should be responsible for expenditure incurred, to three months before and three months

after election—would, if carried, have, to some extent, obviated the difficulty of knowing when an election, so far as the question of expenses is concerned, begins or ends, which exists to the present day. He also, as a member of the Standing Committee on Law, devoted much of his attention to the Criminal Code (Indictable Offences Procedure) Bill.

In July he suffered a severe personal loss in the death of the Rev. Dr. Lee, Secretary of the Church Defence Institution, and editor of the *National Church*. On being brought in contact with this gentleman, Mr. Raikes had speedily recognized his sterling qualities, and hastened to find employment for him in which his valuable gifts could be turned to account. The two were united by a strong bond of mutual affection, and had laboured side by side in the cause of Church Defence for many years.

Dr. Lee lost his living in the sister isle in consequence of the disestablishment of the Irish Church, but in spite of his eminent services in the cause of religion, and of the many efforts on the part of Mr. Raikes and others to procure some recognition of them, he never succeeded in obtaining preferment in England. Many now living must remember him—a little, thick-set, excitable man, whose tongue, apparently, frequently found difficulty in keeping pace with his thoughts—but few, perhaps, realize how deep a debt of gratitude Churchmen of all grades owe to him.

The memorial fund which was subsequently raised,

mainly through the efforts of Lord Egerton, of Tatton, Mr. Raikes, and Sir E. Hertzlet, is, perhaps, the best testimony to the esteem in which he was held by those who knew him most intimately.

During the spring and summer Mr. Raikes, in pursuance of the active policy which he had set before himself and urged upon his leaders, addressed a number of public meetings. Amongst the places he visited were Rhyl, Eastbourne, Mold, and Newport (Mon.). His speeches throughout this year were conspicuous for force and vigour, and at Newport, for instance, he was so merciless in his denunciation of the Government that one of the local papers piteously headed its account of the meeting, "A Condemnation of Everything." He also attended the opening dinner of the Cambridge University Carlton Club, at which the other principal speakers were Mr. Beresford Hope, Mr. Gibson (Lord Ashbourne), and Mr. Alfred Austin.

At the close of the Session he sought repose at the little Welsh watering-place, Criccieth. Mr. Raikes himself, accompanied by three or four of the younger members of his party, made his way from Llwynegrin to the sea by road. A combined riding, driving, and walking tour during the summer, was one of the few relaxations which he allowed himself during later years. His first experiment in this direction was probably entered upon in the hope of reviving the recollections of his childhood, when the annual trip to the sea-side on wheels was one of the great excitements of life. Be this as it may, it proved so successful that

subsequently the excursion was carried out regularly, and, in the course of these extended outings, nearly every picturesque spot in North Wales was visited. The cavalcade usually consisted of two or three riding horses or ponies and a light dog-cart. The latter rendered the party entirely independent of the railway, and obviated most of the drawbacks attendant on a riding-tour pure and simple.

To the younger members of the family these expeditions were a source of unfailing delight, and great was the competition among them for places in the party. Nor can this be wondered at. Mr. Raikes's singularly retentive memory and general culture rendered him a charming companion at all times, but during these excursions he excelled himself. His mind was stored with curious knowledge—folk-lore, local traditions, and quaint fragments of history—acquired in part from his own reading and in part from the lips of his father in the course of their earlier wanderings in the same districts. Under his guidance these journeys were invested with a distinction which was fully appreciated by his young companions, although at the time they were, perhaps, unable to analyze its source, and a romantic aspect was lent to every yard of the way traversed by the party.

Criccieth itself afforded restful pleasure to the hard-worked M.P., who for the time flung all business and Parliamentary cares from him, and settled down to a life of placid enjoyment. On August 23 he wrote to his mother—

“This place is really the gem of the North Wales coast ; and as we look across the broad bay of Mediterranean blue to Harlech’s ‘castled crag’ nearly opposite, and follow the line of the Merioneth mountains down to Barmouth and Towyn beyond it on our left, or glance over the Carnarvonshire peninsula on our right from the Rivals almost to Bardsey, I am constantly being reminded who it was who first taught us to love the picturesque and in these familiar scenes.

“Really the place is as lovely as the Riviera ; and when we stroll along the little esplanade in a balmy moonlight which brings out in very effective outline the Castle and Castle Rock, we can quite fancy ourselves under Italian skies. But to make sure of not losing our home associations, we have brought ‘Old Mortality’ with us, and enjoy as much as anything making L—— and T—— acquainted with Claverhouse and Burley.”

On his return home Mr. Raikes devoted himself to promoting the Lee Memorial Fund, to which allusion has already been made, and also solaced this period of comparative leisure by writing an article, which appeared in the October number of the *National Review* under the title of “The New Law of Elections,” and was described by Mr. Balfour in one of his letters as “excellent.”

With the advent of the autumn campaign, Mr. Raikes again became very busy, as his services were in much request in different parts of the country. The first meeting he addressed was held at Carnarvon, under the presidency of the late Lord Penrhyn, and he also spoke at Bristol (Dolphin Dinner), Newport, Leicester (where he chose for his subject “Parliamentary Reform”), and other places.

A chance meeting with Mr. W. F. Haydon brought him, late in October, an interesting letter, a portion of which I venture to quote—

“The sound of your voice flung an arch over some twenty years and more, and carried me back in a moment to days when life was a little more cheerful and hopeful to us than, perhaps, it may be now.

“Poor Disraeli, I shall never forget meeting him one day in Berkeley Square, just after he succeeded Lord Derby as Prime Minister; and on my saying to him, ‘Well, you see it *has* come: now you must acknowledge that I am a true prophet,’ (he) stopped and looked at me as I was standing before him, bolt upright, and full of life and health, and replied, ‘Ah, but you are young yet; you have life before you, but for me it is twenty years too late. Give me your age and your health.’ ‘And so I will, sir,’ I replied, ‘if you will give me your head.’ He laughed kindly, but the tone of his voice and his whole look at me was so inexpressibly *sad* that I could see he felt the loss of his youth and strength much more than any one suspected. . . . I was much amused at your remembering the poor old *New Quarterly*. It died from want of capital. . . . I was vastly amused at the present Lord Derby*—then only eldest son. I begged him to enrol his name in the list of subscribers. But he would not. His excuse was, ‘There is no room for new publications of this strong political character; besides,’ he added with charming simplicity, ‘I could not really find the necessary space for a new quarterly on my bookshelves.’”

Later on in the same letter the writer expressed doubts as to the possibility of producing a successful memoir of Mr. Disraeli in the absence of autobiographical papers, and *apropos* introduced the following anecdote:—

* Fifteenth Earl.

“ He (Disraeli) suddenly asked me, ‘ Are you one of those who keep letters ? ’ ‘ No, sir,’ I said ; ‘ I never keep a letter unless it is on a family matter, or business affairs of course.’ After that I noticed he used to write to me with much less reserve on men and things, and I never recollect his letters being in any but his own hand.”

An invitation to Sir William Harcourt to stay in December elicited a characteristic response :—

“ Your kind and hospitable letter of the 19th somehow or other got ‘ mixed and mingled ’ up in my official papers and sent off to London, and only returned to me in a box which I only opened in the train on my road to London yesterday. This will account for what must have seemed to you like a churlish silence.

“ I could not, however, have availed myself of your kindness, as, owing to my obligations to my constituents, I was so hustled about that I only got two nights at Hawarden, and was obliged to come home last night to do my Christmas at home. I did not know you were so near a neighbour of the G.O.M. It only, however, proves the old saying, ‘ The nearer the church, the further,’ etc.

“ When you are in office and I in opposition I shall hope to come and see you.”

Hawarden is distant from Llwynegryn but six miles, but nevertheless Mr. Raikes saw little of his illustrious neighbour, who rarely visited the surrounding districts. I remember, however, that on one occasion Mr. Gladstone accepted an invitation to dine with Mr. Bankes of Soughton, and Mr. and Mrs. Raikes were among the guests. It was the night of O’Donnell’s execution for the murder of Carey, and a dark report came down from the Home Office that Mr. Gladstone would be assassinated at the party.

Every possible precaution was taken, and the other guests were much surprised on their arrival to find the house surrounded by police. Patrols were stationed on the roads, and for the nonce Lord Aberdeen and Mr. W. H. Gladstone took the places of the coachman and footman on the box of the Premier's carriage. It was a somewhat anxious time, but apparently the least concerned of all those in the secret was Mr. Gladstone himself, who throughout the evening was as gay and debonair as was usual with him when in society.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN 1884 the influence of Lord Randolph Churchill began to make itself really felt, to the great discomfiture of his nominal leaders. The latter still clung with desperate clasp to their passive attitude, but from time to time their turbulent ally succeeded in forcing them out into the open, and compelling them to give battle. Naturally, they distrusted his impetuosity, while his scarcely veiled contempt for their cautious policy was very galling to men of standing and experience. Although within the party itself relations between the leaders and a large section of their supporters grew daily more strained, the outcome was on the whole beneficial. The inauguration of a more vigorous line of policy kept them united in the face of the enemy, while the disasters in the Soudan furnished a sufficient pretext for an active campaign against the Government both in the House and in the country.

The Liberal policy in Egypt and the Soudan was fiercely challenged on the Address, the debate lasting for five days. Mr. Raikes, who had spoken on the subject at Millom shortly before the opening of Parliament, was invited by Mr. Rowland Winn on behalf of Sir Stafford Northcote to take part in the debate,

to which the disaster of Sinkat lent particular point and interest.

The Liberals, nevertheless, held their own, and for awhile the leaders of the Opposition, exhausted perhaps by the spasmodic effort into which they had been driven by Lord Randolph Churchill, made no further movement, while their personal adherents devoted their energies to quarrelling among themselves.

Their renewed inactivity to a large extent dashed the hopes of those who had begun to hope that a brighter day was dawning ; and Mr. Raikes, who had revelled in the fray so long as it had lasted, reluctantly reverted to the opinion which the experience of several Sessions had gradually driven him to entertain, that it was little use continuing the struggle unless a clearance could be made of most of those to whose guidance the command of the Opposition in the House of Commons was then entrusted. He had from his entry into Parliament nourished a strong liking and respect for Sir Stafford Northcote, and was averse from joining in any movement to supersede him entirely unless events should render it absolutely necessary. At the same time, he was strongly of opinion that his leader was too gentle and pliant to be pitted alone against Mr. Gladstone, and that it was necessary to strengthen his hands by replacing his existing associates with abler men, or even, in the last resort, to hand over the reins to some one possessed of a more powerful individuality.

But the difficulty in the way of effecting any change

lay in the fact that though the hour was opportune, no one with any solid pretensions to authority was ready to take up the task. None of the members of the circle which surrounded the leader of the Opposition, with one exception, were, in Mr. Raikes's opinion, endowed with the necessary ability or statecraft to render them worthy of being entrusted with the virtual command of the party; and the one whom mentally he separated from the rest seemed content to remain in the background.

Meanwhile, the name of Randolph Churchill was on the lips of many, but him the member for the University was not prepared to accept without considerable reserve. He recognized in the member for Woodstock a real force, but felt more than a slight hesitation in reposing confidence in a man who was obviously playing for his own hand, and evidently was prepared to go to ruthless extremities in order to attain his ends. For a time, then, he thought it politic to wait upon events; and meanwhile, moved to Biblical comparison, perhaps, by some reminiscence of "Elijah's Mantle," an article from Lord Randolph's pen which had aroused a widespread sensation in the previous year, he amused himself by satirizing the two wings of the party with unsparing and impartial vigour.

In March he published in the *Fortnightly Review*, over the signature of "An English Tory," an article entitled "Job and his Comforters: Elihu's Parable." In it, under the thinnest of disguises, figured several of the more prominent members of the Opposition.

To Sir Stafford Northcote was allotted, as of course, the title-*rôle*, while Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Gorst, and Sir Henry Wolff played the parts of the historic Comforters.

The article was widely read and discussed, and much curiosity was displayed as to the identity of its author. The secret was, however, well kept, at any rate for a few weeks.

Some idea of its general tenor may be gathered from the following extracts :—

“The sad soliloquy ceases. The hands of perplexity desist from travelling up and down the sleeves of irresolution. The knocker has sounded ; the door opens, and Eliphaz* is announced. His demeanour is almost obsequious, his deference really charming ; but he has been observing with anxiety the result of certain recent elections, and he has thought it well that certain conclusions at which he has arrived should be submitted to his leader. The Central Committee—here a gentle sigh escapes his listener—seem scarcely to have appreciated the particular circumstances of a particular constituency. It is true that the vacancy had come rather suddenly. . . . The Liberal candidate had since been returned by a majority of three hundred ; and he ventured to say that throughout the whole transaction everybody had behaved ill and foolishly except himself. . . . He rose to go just as another and louder peal at the bell heralded the announcement of Zophar † and Bildad, ‡ who came in together.

“Their visit, however, appeared to have been dictated only by a spirit of politeness. Some disquieting rumour as to the state of their Chief’s health had engendered in them an earnest solicitude to be informed of his well-being. Yet was their

* Mr. Gorst.

† Sir H. Wolff.

‡ Lord R. Churchill.

very presence evidently distressful to the object of their sympathy, who appeared to be not a little puzzled as to whether this occasion could be improved so as to obtain from them, if not an expression of regret for the past, at least some assurance of submission for the future. But that terrible letter *—followed, as it had been, by various contributions of opinion in all the morning papers—seemed to paralyze its victim's efforts to assert his authority. It was too plain that he was the culprit on whose pusillanimity and inaction rested the whole responsibility for all party reverses, past, present, and future. Zophar was very good-natured, and introduced one or two anecdotes possessing a peculiar interest; but his companion seemed rather moody and silent, as if he had rather come to observe the effects of his exhortation than to follow it up by any very immediate application. Had he not shown his magnanimity by coming to have ten minutes of friendly conversation with the man whom he had just held up to public scorn as a hopeless incapable? And was not the mere fact of his sitting in that armchair a sort of indication of the superiority so contemptuously taken for granted?"

The moral drawn was that as Job was permitted to retrieve his past errors, and to enjoy a fresh lease of life and prosperity upon breaking with the past and all its associations, in the same manner might Sir Stafford Northcote, by casting away the potsherds which had borne him company in his humiliation, and setting before himself "a worthier occupation than an aimless friction with the baser relics of his former importance," be enabled to rise to higher things and to re-establish his party in the position which it had formerly occupied.

The advice, although kindly meant, was no doubt

* Lord Randolph Churchill's famous letter to the *Times*.

couched in too caustic a vein to prove very acceptable. Apart from any intrinsic value attaching to it, the article takes high rank if looked at merely as an effort of satire, or upon the broader ground of literary finish. The editor of the *Fortnightly*, in writing to acknowledge its receipt on February 22, said—

“‘The hands of perplexity travelling up and down the sleeves of irresolution’ is *excellent*. It is epigrammatic phrases of this sort which live—and yours have the true ring of vitality. The whole article delights me. The literary form is a real treat to me.”

On March 23, after Mr. Escott had had full opportunity of gauging the effect produced, he wrote again:—

“It is, on the whole, the best piece of political writing that I have yet been able to publish in the *Fortnightly*. . . . I had, by the bye, a most amusing letter from Sir William Harcourt about it. ‘The article,’ he said, ‘is wonderfully clever and bitter, but as Home Secretary I think it only right to warn you that it brings you within the jurisdiction of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.’”

Lord Randolph Churchill’s rapid rise provoked not only the hostility of his titular chiefs, but in even an intenser degree the jealousy of those who occupied a secondary rank in the party. The former, in turn, attempted to make use of him and to thwart him, while the latter were almost unanimous in their desire to compass his downfall. Mr. Raikes himself inclined more strongly almost day by day in the direction of giving to Lord Randolph Churchill some portion of the authority as yet denied him. In a letter written to his son Henry on March 13 he said—

“We struggle along in the usual chaotic manner, and I have grown quite sick of the party and hopeless of the cause so far as Parliament is concerned. But there is, I think, a healthy current of opinion perceptible out-of-doors which may create something more like a *real* Conservative party in the next House.

“Randolph Churchill seems to me the sole hope, and he wants very careful counsellors about him.”

By May the whole country was glowing with excitement over the position of General Gordon, and Mr. Raikes, in common with other members of Parliament, was inundated with letters imploring him to urge his leaders to head a great popular movement instead of merely asking questions. Lord Salisbury himself was, no doubt, fully alive to the necessity of taking action, but in order to do so effectually it was imperative to secure the assistance of Lord Randolph Churchill, for this, in view of the strained relations then existing, could not be counted on as a matter of course.

It appears, however, that at a meeting held at Lord Salisbury's house on May 10 matters were satisfactorily arranged, and a few days later Sir Michael Hicks-Beach brought forward a motion condemning the Government for their treatment of Gordon. Mr. Gladstone on this occasion was deserted by the Irish members, and the credit for detaching them was generally admitted to be due to Lord Randolph Churchill. The assault resulted in a moral victory for the Opposition, but it soon became apparent that instead of drawing the leaders and their dashing

lieutenant more closely together, the only effect obtained was an increase of distrust, fostered by the jealousy of subordinates, on the one side, and of independence on the other.

The determination to extinguish, if possible, the rising star was, in fact, so marked, that "an English Tory" was moved once more to deal with the situation. His contribution on this occasion appeared in the June number of the *Fortnightly*, under the title of "Joseph and his Brethren: An Eastern Apologue with a Western Moral."

This essay was couched in a somewhat less bitter vein than "Job and his Comforters," but was by no means devoid of irony, the parallels drawn between certain members of the semi-official clique on the Opposition side, whose characteristics the writer touched in with much malicious skill, and the sons of Jacob, being replete with humour. Lord Randolph himself did not escape unscathed, as witness the following extract:—

"Joseph, unquestionably, must have been a very provoking younger brother. The mere fact that his greater gifts were recognized at the very outset of his career by those most capable of judging them; his objectionable sense of superiority; his fantastic dreams and vexatious visions, so unworthy of his position, and so irreconcilable with the character of a future statesman; his coat of many colours, worn in all probability with rather aggravating ostentation, when his elders and contemporaries attired themselves, in season and out of season, in the orthodox livery of their tribe; his audacious, if not impudent, declaration that a day was

coming when not only the rivals of his own generation, but both the august personages who presided over the family councils should come and submit themselves to his acknowledged supremacy ;—all these things were as gall and wormwood to the self-satisfied young sheikhs, whose highest ambition was to swagger through the bazaars of Hebron, or to compass, by every device of pettifogging chicanery, the retention of a well or two which might be threatened by Philistine aggression.”

The writer, after dwelling fancifully upon the circumstances surrounding the disposal of Joseph by his brethren, and pointing out the existence up to a certain point of a “resemblance between these incidents of primeval history and events which have happened in days much less remote,” went on to say—

“He” (Lord Randolph Churchill) “does not belong to the little ring—semi-official as yet, but which expects to become at the next turn of the wheel official in the fullest sense—that hedges in the rival queen-bees of the Conservative hive from all communication with their party, their followers, and their countrymen. It is the lot of almost every party leader to surround himself with a little circle of men whose zeal is only equalled by their exclusiveness, and whose ambition far exceeds their ability ; . . . these conspire to intercept the interchange of political confidence between the leaders of the party and the party at large, and none of them would shrink, as we have recently learned, from inflicting upon Lord Randolph Churchill all the execration, extinction, and exile which his presumption has deserved.

“ . . . It is obviously not impossible for the smaller fry of Conservative officialism at the present moment to exclude from their ranks the one man who seems likely to save them from universal unpopularity. And if they are abetted by their recognized chiefs they may succeed in their object.

But Lord Salisbury should remember that Jacob certainly did not connive at the conspiracy in the wilderness ; and Sir Stafford Northcote may also take note that Leah, as far as we know, was not a consenting party to the machinations of her offspring. If they had been open to the suspicion of any such complicity, it is possible that even the magnanimity of Joseph would not have been equal to the task of resuscitating the fallen fortunes of his race."

The meaning of the lesson thus sought to be imparted, is almost too obvious to need explanation. In Mr. Raikes's opinion, Lord Randolph had by this time shown himself to be the one man capable of rallying the country to the side of the Conservatives. He must come to the front in any event—must, even if driven out of the Conservative ranks, become a power in the land.

"Recognize this fact," urged the writer. "Do not let your eyes be blinded by the mediocrities of the Front Bench, but take advantage of the circumstance that you have in your ranks a man of commanding ability and undoubted force of character."

The Session was not many weeks old when Mr. Gladstone introduced his Reform Bill, which soon became the subject of fierce controversy. The main objection taken to it by the Conservatives was that the measure, while enlarging the Franchise, made no provision for the inequalities which must arise under its action. It was, they urged, impossible to separate an increase of the electorate from its corollary, a re-arrangement of electoral areas, without manifest injustice.

Mr. Raikes, at a meeting of the party, suggested that a committee should be formed to scrutinize the details of the measure, and shortly afterwards received the following letter from Mr. Edward Stanhope :—

“Your suggestion at the Carlton meeting the other day had been anticipated by Sir Stafford Northcote, and he has formed the nucleus of a committee, with Beach as chairman, to consider the clauses of the Reform Bill.

“Beach hopes that you will consent to join the committee, which includes Gibson as representing Ireland, Maxwell from Scotland, and two or three other English members.”

Mr. Raikes took up the work with ready hands, and throughout the Session was constant in his attendance when the question of Reform was under discussion.

He delivered a telling speech early in the debate, on March 27, which subsequently led to a lively passage of arms between himself and Mr. G. W. E. Russell. To quote from a contemporary account of the proceedings—

“When Mr. Raikes rose to resume the adjourned debate on the Reform Bill, there was but a meagre attendance, typical indeed of the want of interest displayed in the measure throughout the country. His was one of the ablest speeches yet made from the Conservative side. . . . Mr. George Russell had a great opportunity of distinguishing himself, but let it slip. He was unable to answer Mr. Raikes, who had dealt with the question in a manner never dreamt of by the Under-Secretary of the Local Government Board. To tell an honorary member that he was the representative of a University, and could not be supposed to sympathize with

the measure before the House was hardly worthy of a relative of the great Whig statesman."

In April Mr. Raikes varied his Parliamentary duties by addressing two or three public meetings, and said in a letter written to his mother on the 22nd of that month—

"I have been rambling over the country throughout last week—to Neath on Monday, speaking there on Tuesday ; to Taunton, and speaking there on Wednesday ; to Llwynegrin on Thursday, going over the buildings, etc., there on Friday ; and back to town on Saturday. It was miserably cold nearly all the time, and I am glad to get back from the delusive greenery of the country to smoky, comfortable London."

Returning to the Parliamentary Session, we find the Government, in spite of the narrow majorities by which it maintained its position on two or three critical occasions, pushing steadily on with the Reform Bill, although a strong impression was gaining ground that the Lords would decline to pass it unless due provision were made for redistribution of seats at the same time. That the justice of this point of view was largely admitted in the Commons also is proved by the fact that an amendment of Mr. Raikes's, to the effect that an extension of the Franchise should be accompanied by Redistribution, was rejected by only twenty-six votes, although the Government at the time were nominally possessed of an enormous majority.

The Bill in due course reached the Lords on

July 7, and the Peers, while asserting their approval of its principle, refused to pass it without the essential part—Redistribution—except under one condition. They expressed their readiness to accept the measure in its existing shape if the constituencies so desired it, and called upon the Government either to introduce their Redistribution Scheme, and to send them up a complete Reform Bill; or to consult the people and find out whether they approved or not of the Bill in its imperfect form.

It is unnecessary to do more than allude to the agitation set on foot as soon as it was realized that the Upper House was in earnest; but that Lord Salisbury had no idea of wavering is shown by the following letter, written in reply to one addressed to him by Mr. Raikes:—

“ July 15, 1884.

“ MY DEAR RAIKES,

“ Many thanks. The meeting at the Carlton passed off very well. The vast majority were fully with us, and as far as the House of Lords were concerned, no elements of dissension appeared which we did not already know of. . . . I am a little doubtful as to the wisdom of going into great detail on the question of redistribution. We may endanger several of our friends' seats. With your two other recommendations I quite concur.

“ I earnestly hope we shall keep together in November.

“ Yours very truly,

“ SALISBURY.”

Mr. Raikes was exceptionally active in Parliament throughout this Session. His exertions were naturally

mainly directed to the Reform Bill, but he found time to introduce on his own account a Defamation of Character Bill, which was read a second time towards the end of June without a division. He ran down to Wales for a few days towards the end of July in order to fulfil some local engagements, but returned to London for Lord Salisbury's dinner to the Council of the National Union.

Lord Randolph Churchill's proposals for reorganizing the management of the party had not, by any means, been received with favour by that body, but Lord Salisbury appears to have succeeded in smoothing some of the difficulties with which the question was surrounded, for on July 27 Mr. Raikes wrote to Mr. Walker Baily—

“You will be glad to hear that there has been a great reconciliation in the party. The Central Committee is dissolved, and Salisbury and Randolph have kissed each other. I only hope it may last. The occasion is to be signalized by a grand attack on the Government next week on Egyptian affairs generally.”

The agitation in favour of the Reform Bill had by degrees developed into a direct attack on the House of Lords, and had assumed sufficiently large dimensions to impress upon the Conservative leaders the necessity of counter-demonstrations. One of the most important of the latter was held in August at Nostell Priory. The principal speakers were Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord Carnarvon, and Mr. Raikes, who addressed what the *Times* described as an “imposing

gathering" in the open air. Sir Stafford, with more than customary vigour, emphasized the fact that those who declared that the majority of the House of Lords and the Conservative party were opposed to a further extension of the franchise in the counties, simply asserted an untruth.

Throughout the autumn campaign Mr. Raikes devoted himself almost entirely to the Franchise question, on which he was naturally well qualified to speak. At a meeting held at Mold he dexterously adopted Mr. Gladstone's alternative phrase that the House of Lords had "effectually stopped" the Reform Bill, pointing out that they had not "rejected" it, as it was still upon the order-book of that House when Parliament was prorogued.

So good a case was made out by Conservative orators generally, that it soon became apparent that the Government had little to gain by pushing matters to extremities against the Lords; and the publication of the text of their Redistribution Bill, unauthorized as it was declared to be, was generally taken as a sign that they were unwilling to throw away the substance for the shadow. Mr. Raikes, like many others, was inclined to believe that the Government were not entirely innocent in the matter, and were, indeed, willing "to surrender the information while pretending to withhold it."

During a portion of the autumn Session the University member made Cambridge his head-quarters, and in company with Sir Hardinge Giffard (Lord

Halsbury), attended the annual dinner of the Cambridge Carlton Club, postponed from May to November 29. He was within easy reach of London, and able to run up on important occasions, as, for instance, to use his own words, "for our one other Reform debate, as soon as Gladstone and Northcote have sufficiently studied the parts of the lion lying down with the lamb in our new political paradise."

In December he returned to Wales, in order to take part in the festivities attendant on the coming of age of his eldest son.

There can be little doubt that Mr. Raikes strengthened his Parliamentary position considerably during 1884. Although tied down in the main to a subject dry and technical in its essence, he showed so powerful a grasp of detail and such infinite readiness in snatching tactical advantages, that his leaders in the following year had no hesitation in asking him to bear a considerable portion of the burthen involved by the intricacies of the Redistribution Scheme. And when, as happened in due course, he and Lord Randolph Churchill began to draw nearer to each other, he felt that he was able to look forward to his own immediate future with a considerable degree of confidence.

His fatal knack of ridicule, however, stood him in bad stead later on, and though he must have derived much quiet enjoyment from the compilation of the articles already referred to in this chapter, it would, perhaps, have been wiser in his own interests had he

reserved his sarcasm entirely for the benefit of his opponents. He did not entirely neglect these latter, as is shown by the publication of his parody entitled "Canute II." in *Vanity Fair* early in the year, concerning which the then editor wrote—

"Your verses which you have been so kind as to send to *Vanity Fair* are admirable. This is the kind of thing that sticks. I wish I could persuade you to send us weekly something (long or short) of the same nature."

But his sharpest shafts were at this time aimed at the more pretentious members of his own party.

A less aggressive effort than those already referred to was an article published in the November number of the *National Review*, as may be gathered from the following letter written by the editor on September 27:—

"MY DEAR RAIKES,

"I had several good laughs, and many more quiet smiles, over your paper last night, when I read it in print for the first time.

"It is capital and most amusing.

"I am sorry Courthorpe did not print it in the October number; but he said he could not manage it.

"It shall appear under my auspices.

"I am rather disposed to suggest you should add another *page* written in a serious vein, and containing an appeal to the Conservative party not to forfeit the substance for the shadow of Conservatism, and, in a word, to preach a short sermon on the text *Respice finem*.

"Is not Salisbury's paper masterly?"

"Yours very sincerely,

"ALFRED AUSTIN."

CHAPTER XX.

PROCEEDINGS in Parliament during the year 1885 present many features of interest, even if considered merely from the standpoint of the casual observer. But though there is no uncertainty as to the effects produced, the causes are, to some extent, shrouded in mystery. When the inner history of this period comes to be written, it will probably be found that forces were at work, the existence of which, though guessed at by a few, was entirely unsuspected by many who were then believed to be behind the scenes.

The year opened dramatically enough with the attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament with dynamite, and the excitement created by the explosion had hardly passed away when the whole nation was plunged into consternation by the news of the death of Gordon. This calamity can hardly be said to have been unexpected, but its actual occurrence was regarded in political circles as a deathblow to the Liberal Government, which for months had been supposed to be tottering to its fall.

On February 27 Mr. Raikes wrote to his mother—

“Here everything is anxiety and confusion. The Government will, I think, probably fall to-night, which will serve them right, of course, but will impose on our people a burden which I greatly fear is altogether beyond their capability.

“Sir S. N.’s resolution was thought so feeble in its terms that our Junta (at last!) sent for me, and begged me to draw one more calculated to strengthen our party.

“This I very reluctantly have done, and it will be moved to-night by Lord G. Hamilton if Northcote’s is defeated.”

The Government, nevertheless, held their own until June, which month witnessed the downfall of Mr. Gladstone’s second Ministry (upon what appeared to be a matter of secondary importance), and the assumption of the reins by Lord Salisbury. In November, as will be remembered, an appeal to the country resulted in a victory for Mr. Gladstone once again.

From the beginning of the Session the air was thick with rumours, and on all sides startling developments were expected. Under these circumstances it can hardly be a matter for surprise that members in general found some difficulty in settling down steadily to work.

The Government duly brought in their Redistribution Bill, but this aroused little interest save in the breasts of those who imagined that they were likely to suffer under its operation, and among the little knot of experts to whom was confided the duty of working out the practical details of the measure.

Mr. Raikes, who was included in the second category, was in constant communication with Sir Charles Dilke and the other members of the Boundary

Commission. He had commenced his labours in the recess, and that they were no sinecure, even during the earlier stages, may be gathered from an instance mentioned in a letter to his mother dated January 12:—

“A—— and I were busy on Saturday—and, I am ashamed to say, all yesterday afternoon up to and after the legitimate hour of post—in perfecting my scheme for the electoral subdivision of Cheshire, which is to be considered by the Boundary Commissioners to-day. And we are rather proud of having got through this work of necessity, including a nicely coloured map, just in time!”

The mass of papers devoted to this question which he left behind, sufficiently testify to his unwearying industry in connection with it, both in and out of Parliament.

Amongst other matters, special provision was made in the Bill for the punishment of electors found guilty of corrupt practices in the course of the Election of 1880. In the first instance, it was proposed to inflict the penalty of disfranchisement for life. This suggestion evoked much feeling at Chester and other places implicated, and Mr. Raikes received many letters both from friends and opponents among his old constituents begging him, if possible, to obtain some mitigation of punishment.

When the matter came before the House the proposition he made was that persons scheduled for bribery at the 1880 election should be incapable of being registered as Parliamentary electors during a period of seven years after the presentation of the Commissioners'

reports. It was felt that the penalty of disfranchisement for life suggested in the Bill was too severe, and Mr. Raikes's views met with a considerable degree of support on both sides of the House. On the Attorney - General (Sir Henry James) leaving the matter in the hands of members generally, the amendment was agreed to without a division.

Some of the Chester Liberals were far from satisfied at the result, as they had hoped that the term would have been limited to the life of the existing Parliament. But on the whole, their late member's interposition was well received, and brought him many letters of thanks.

The two most important political gatherings attended by Mr. Raikes during the first half of the year were of widely differing natures, and were held at Wrexham and Cambridge respectively.

The first, a mass meeting, took place in April, and Lord Salisbury, who was the principal speaker, was very warmly received. He and Mr. Raikes were the guests of the late Sir Watkin Wynn at Wynnstay; and this must have been the last time that the member for Cambridge University set eyes upon the "Prince in Wales;" for less than a month later he had passed away amid general sorrow. To Mr. Raikes personally, Sir Watkin's death was a very severe blow, and by it he lost one of his most staunch and faithful friends.

The second meeting was the annual dinner of the Cambridge University Carlton Club, which was held on June 6.

It was mainly through Mr. Raikes's influence that Lord Randolph Churchill was induced to attend the banquet; and that the former had gained a very real influence over the latter, transitory though it proved to be, is proved by an incident which occurred in the course of the evening. Needless to say, the leader of the Fourth Party had an enthusiastic reception at the hands of the undergraduates, but at first some of the older men looked at him askance. He was destined, however, on this occasion to win all hearts. He spoke with splendid vigour, and when he had finished it was evident that few, if any, had been able to resist the charm of his spirited eloquence.

At the conclusion of the proceedings a small party adjourned to Mr. Mortlock's house, where Lord Randolph was staying. The guest of the evening was, apparently, rather tired by his exertions, for he sat silent for awhile. Presently, leaving the older men, he came across the room and began to talk to the present writer, then an undergraduate. Some allusion to the leaders of the party brought from him the unexpected query, "Do you know who my leader is?"

I smiled and shook my head, and he answered his own question by saying abruptly, "Your father,— Mr. Raikes;" and then he added something about "owing a great deal to him."

I do not doubt that at the moment Lord Randolph Churchill spoke in all sincerity, although he would, perhaps, have described the relationship between himself and Mr. Raikes more accurately by the use

of the term "counsellor." The modern Rupert of Debate was not a man to follow another's lead. Nevertheless, at this period he might, and, as it seems, at times, in cases where he felt that experience was lacking in himself, did take advantage of the advice of those in whose riper judgment he had confidence. Later events show plainly enough that in seeking guidance he was but passing through one of his many phases. To reliance upon his own capacity he, no doubt, owed his brilliant rise, and, in an equal degree, his sudden fall, rendered irretrievable, as the latter was, by his omission to take into calculation one important factor in the political situation.*

Barely two days after the Cambridge meeting the long-looked-for crisis in the affairs of Mr. Gladstone's Administration took place.

The Government, who had weathered so many storms, were defeated upon a detail of the Budget; and on June 9 it was announced that they had sent in their resignation.

The prevailing feeling was one of astonishment, first that the Ministry should have suffered defeat at all upon a matter of secondary importance; and second that they should, in consequence of such defeat, have thought it necessary to hand in their portfolios.

The Conservatives were naturally exultant as a body, but, as the situation began to clear, the more prudent of them realized that they were placed in a very awkward position.

* The existence of Mr. Goschen.

To begin with, it was impossible to make an appeal to the country before November, owing to the action of the Redistribution Bill (which was then passing its final stages in the Lords), unless they were prepared to throw away all the pains and labour which had been expended on the measure.

In the second place, they were in a decided minority in the House of Commons, and would, if they accepted office, only be able to deal with the embarrassments created by the late Cabinet at the pleasure of, and in a manner approved of by Mr. Gladstone.

In the third place, by accepting office the Conservatives would transform themselves from the attacking into the defending party when the appeal was eventually made to the country, and this alone was certain to be gravely disadvantageous to them, looked at from a tactical point of view.

The impression grew rapidly that the Liberal defeat was not entirely unpremeditated, and that it would not have occurred had the inner circle of the Cabinet seen any advantage in retaining office. It was shrewdly suspected that internal difficulties, which were known to exist, had refused to yield to treatment, and that it had been decided that the only method of avoiding an open rupture, with its attendant disadvantages, was for the Government to resign as a whole before the explosion took place.

An additional inducement to ministers to pursue this course was probably furnished by the consciousness

that thereby they would not only escape from their own embarrassments, but would place their opponents in a serious dilemma.

It is, perhaps, not putting the case too strongly to say that when the appropriate moment arrived defeat was deliberately courted. The question of "Beer" is a dangerous one for any Ministry to handle, but no special precautions were taken when the discussion of this delicate subject had to be faced. A four-line whip had, in the course of the Session, lost its effectiveness; and until the middle of the debate no announcement was made that the question was to be treated as one of confidence. Even when it became apparent that the Liberals were in danger of defeat the Premier brushed aside the suggestion of an adjournment which would have enabled him to bring up his reserves, and, apparently with a light heart, faced the issue.

This short review of ancient history will, perhaps, enable my younger readers to grasp the difficulty in which the Conservative party were placed at this juncture.

As to Lord Salisbury's courage in deciding to accept office, there can be no two opinions; but whether he was justified from a party standpoint in doing so, is a very different question.

Of one thing we may be quite certain, and that is that he was guided by the highest and most patriotic motives. He felt, no doubt, that by taking office he would be doing a service to the country at large, and

in that belief he did not shrink from what he conceived to be his duty.

One important factor in the situation must not, however, be entirely lost sight of. It was commonly believed at the time that the Queen herself was most earnest in her desire that Lord Salisbury should assume the reins. If this be true, one can hardly wonder that when patriotism and loyalty were placed in the scales on the one hand, and expediency on the other, that, with a man of generous temperament, the former far outweighed the latter.

Nevertheless, when the decision became known, it aroused considerable foreboding in the Conservative camp.

On the whole, Mr. Raikes was not averse to the experiment being tried under certain conditions. The first of these was that the services of the semi-official ring should be as far as possible dispensed with, and the leading places filled by younger and bolder men. The second was that a clear understanding should be arrived at with the Opposition that the new Government should have a free hand during the remainder of the Session.

That he himself looked forward to important office cannot be doubted, but in construing the next letter care must be taken to discriminate between his own personal disappointment and his regret that the Government, by neglecting to make their foothold sure, and to rid themselves of members who were, in his opinion, a source of weakness, should have paved

the way for Mr. Gladstone's ultimate triumph which he himself plainly foresaw.

In a letter to his mother, dated June 23, he wrote expressing much concern at the illness of his favourite sister, and then went on to say—

“It may be some distraction, though perhaps not altogether a pleasant one to you, to hear something of my share in the events of the last few days. . . . Lord Salisbury came back from Balmoral to London on Monday, the 15th, and called together some of his friends, not including me.

“On Tuesday afternoon Sir M. Beach, who had accepted the leadership in the Commons, came to me, and asked me to say frankly to him what were my own wishes or expectations regarding myself in the projected Ministry. I told him that, circumstanced as I am, . . . I could not afford to accept any secondary position in a Ministry which nobody expects to live six months; that I was not to be tempted to join them, therefore, by anything less than a Secretaryship of State, and that I had fixed my mind particularly on the Home Office.

“This he asked to be allowed to communicate to Lord S., and I assented. It did not appear to me necessary to tell him that nothing would induce me to act under . . . all of whom I was determined to pitch overboard, if possible.

“Hearing no more, I went to him on Wednesday, and saying that I must, of course, leave Lord S. to act as he thought proper on my communication, I should be very much hurt if I was not further consulted by him. And Sir M. B. instantly said that Lord S. would write to me and ask me to call on him next day.

“No such request has, however, reached me.

“The next day it became known that Lord S. was going to surround himself with . . . and Randolph Churchill informed me that he had pressed my claims for the Home Office in vain.”

Lord Randolph himself, it can hardly be doubted, had to be satisfied with only an instalment of what he desired. He achieved Cabinet rank, it is true, as Secretary of State for India ; and it was said that it was with his approval that the leadership of the Commons was entrusted to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. The Cabinet of 1885 was, nevertheless, practically a reproduction of that of 1874-80. Places were found for all the surviving members of the latter, and the mass was but leavened by the introduction of Lord Randolph himself, Lord George Hamilton, and one or two younger men, for whose benefit the sum total of those included was slightly increased.*

Apart from the failure of his own hopes, the retention of the "elderly gentlemen," at whom Lord Randolph had so often gibed, and with whom he now seated himself in apparent contentment, was a real disappointment to Mr. Raikes.

* It was asserted with some confidence at the time, that Mr. Gibson, now Lord Ashbourne, proved a valuable intermediary in the selection of this Cabinet, and that he personally conducted a number of delicate negotiations.

Three courses were open to Lord Salisbury—the first, to give all the principal posts to the old hands ; the second, while retaining the great majority of his former colleagues, to make some slight concession to the younger and more vigorous element ; the third, to draw freely from the ranks of the rising talent to the exclusion of several of the elder men. The second plan was favoured by Mr. Gibson, and he was said, in urging its adoption, to have reminded the Premier of the ancient maxim, "*In medio tutissimus ibis.*"

On this being repeated to Lord Randolph, with a smile he passed the matter by, and merely remarked, "Now I come to think of it, Gibson is very like an 'ibis.' 'The tutissimus ibis' wouldn't be a bad name for him, would it?"

He held that the appointment of a strong Conservative administration might have been at this juncture of almost incalculable advantage to the country at large, and would, moreover, in the long run, possibly have had the effect of consolidating the party to which he owed allegiance.

From the combination settled upon he looked for no such results under the most favourable circumstances. He came to the conclusion, nevertheless, that, though it might be powerless for good, it would serve as, at any rate, an inoffensive stopgap, if it could fulfil its allotted span without being openly discredited. This end, it appeared to him, could only be achieved with certainty by arriving at a definite understanding with Mr. Gladstone. It was more or less common knowledge at the time that the latter was averse from giving the specific assurances demanded by Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Raikes expressed the feeling of an important section when he represented that to undertake the government of the country in the absence of such pledges would be to court disaster, whether regarded from a patriotic or a party standpoint.

Many men under similar circumstances would have stood aside and permitted matters to take their course without remonstrance. But to do this was not in Mr. Raikes's nature. And nothing, I think, could be more characteristic of the man than that, in the midst of his own disappointment, he should have been able to rise above mere personal vexation, and to emphasize, for the benefit of the leader who had ignored his

services, the reality of a danger which the latter appeared to under-estimate. The letter goes on :—

“On Friday I set to work with R—, Y—, and some others to get up a memorandum entreating Lord S. not to take office unless he obtained adequate and explicit assurances from Gladstone that he would keep the peace up to the end of the session. This was signed by thirty-six leading members of the party, and handed to Sir M. Beach.

“On Saturday and Sunday I hoped that this policy had prevailed, and that Lord S. had reconsidered the mad idea of going into action with the crew whom he had collected.

“But yesterday the Queen prevailed, and our people have accepted office, with, as I fear, the certainty of ruin to themselves and the country.”

With this decision, Mr. Raikes's last remaining hope vanished. But now that the die was cast, he had leisure to review his own position. Some idea of the depth of his despondency may be gathered from the concluding sentences of his letter. His party, as it seemed to him, doomed to destruction, the ungrudging labours of over twenty years forgotten, his very views treated with silent disdain,—why continue the ungrateful struggle?

But let us turn to his own words :—

“I was informed yesterday that Mr. A. E. Miller, Q.C., one of the Railway Commissioners, would resign his post to stand for Dublin University. The office is lucrative, £3000 a year, and not extremely laborious.

“As there is no further place for me in the counsels of the party, I decided, after much mental wrestling, to ask for it.

“If my request is granted, it will vacate my seat for Cambridge and terminate my political career. I need scarcely

tell you what anguish it has cost me to take this step, and to give up the objects of a lifetime. I suppose I have loved the career too well; and the idol is broken, doubtless all for the best. I doubt whether physical suicide could involve a greater strain and torture of mind. But I feel sure that I have chosen the wiser course in view of all considerations. Nevertheless, it may well happen that Mr. Miller may yet hesitate to abandon so good a post, or Giffard (Lord Chancellor) may not give it me. In that case I shall be rather like a man cut down after hanging himself."

The following day, June 24, Lord Salisbury sent for Mr. Raikes, and asked him to accept a place in his Ministry. This recognition of his services, tardy though it was, and insufficient as he felt it to be, did much to dispel the resentment felt by the member for Cambridge University. Now that his Chief had finally decided upon going into action, he would do nothing to hamper him. He offered independent support, but declined to identify himself blindfold with a policy in the development of which he would have no part, by accepting an offer which would have given him "the semblance without the reality of power in the Council of the Ministry."

Apart from considerations already glanced at, Mr. Raikes was of opinion that the, at that time uncontradicted, report that an understanding had been arrived at with the Irish members, was in itself a sufficient justification for his decision. He cordially disliked and distrusted the idea of such an alliance, and feared that if it really existed, the Government would be to a large degree driven to lean upon it in the absence

of any definite pledge on Mr. Gladstone's part. He therefore turned a deaf ear to the proposals made, although they included certain contingencies of an advantageous nature. His absence from the Cabinet occasioned some surprise, and when it became known that he had declined to join the Ministry he was asked for his reasons from many quarters. In particular his Cambridge friends were much concerned, but that his explanations were regarded as satisfactory may be gathered from the following letter from the Master of Corpus, dated July 3, 1885:—

“I can quite understand your refusal to accept any office which might give the semblance without the reality of power in the Council of the Ministry.

“Still, I feel you have made a great sacrifice. Most men in your position would have accepted office even if they felt that the post offered was not such as to satisfy their just claims. By the course you have taken you cannot but have gained the respect of the Prime Minister, and I trust that he will yet show that he values consistency and adherence to principle, and knows how to reward them.

“I can imagine no more attractive position than that of an independent Conservative M.P., with the right to mix freely in the fray. But this is an expensive luxury. On the other hand, the Speakership is a dignified and lucrative post with the reversion of higher rank, and it is likely in the future to be of great political importance. *Much* as I value University representation, I value it more on Imperial than Academic grounds. The occasions on which Academic interests have to be promoted or defended are comparatively rare. But it is an immense advantage to the Empire, and will be still greater, in all probability, that such men as the Universities send to Parliament should take part in the deliberations of the House of Commons. I *should* like to see you presiding

over that great assembly. It would be an honour to the University, and I conceive that you could effectually serve the country in such a position."

This letter correctly shadows the nature of Lord Salisbury's proposals.

It is unnecessary to devote much space to the remainder of the Session. The Redistribution Bill reached its final stage early in July, and about the same time the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, in which Mr. Raikes had taken a very active interest, was read the second time. Other measures of public importance which engaged his attention were, the Bill for Taxing Corporate Property, which stirred considerable feeling in the breasts of his Cambridge friends, and the Pluralities Bill. The member for the University managed to obtain an assurance in regard to the former measure which satisfied his constituents, and he was equally successful in respect of the Pluralities Bill, so far as it affected Wales.

The Session closed unmarred by any untoward incident, and members, for the most part, were glad to get away in order to complete their preparations for the approaching General Election. Mr. Raikes, who was personally free from anxiety on this score, devoted himself to organizing the campaign in his own immediate neighbourhood.

With October the struggle began in earnest, and Mr. Raikes's services were much in request. He did not, of course, address any political meetings at Cambridge, but towards the end of the month, in company

with Mr. Beresford Hope, attended a Church Defence meeting there.

Although the decision of the Cambridge Liberals not to contest the University seats left Mr. Raikes at liberty to assist his friends, he was, unfortunately, at this juncture rendered incapable of active political work by an attack of illness, the result of an injury to his leg sustained by him earlier in the autumn. He made an effort on November 2 to disregard his ailment, but this proved too much for him, and for some little time he had the mortification of being obliged to assume the *rôle* of a looker-on. Curiously enough, his own return was announced to him the day before his birthday, this being the third occasion on which political success had come to him within a few hours of that event.

As he had foretold in the summer, the advantage lay almost entirely with the Liberals, and his friends met with but scanty success at the polls. This vindication of his judgment was achieved at too great a sacrifice to afford him any satisfaction; and it is quite possible that the gloomy view which he then took of the situation might again have proved correct, had not Mr. Gladstone succeeded in upsetting all calculations in the following year, and in driving a large and influential section of his own followers into the Opposition camp.

There can be little doubt that the Election of 1885 was one of Mr. Gladstone's greatest tactical successes, but it is possible that this triumph in itself was the

cause of his undoing, by inspiring him with the belief that failure could not be written across any page to which he chose to turn.

That he was as full of life and vigour at this time as most men are in their prime, is plainly shown by the following letter, which sufficiently explains itself:—

“Dalmeny Park, November 11, 1885.

“DEAR MR. RAIKES,

“I am sorry there has been a delay as to answering your kind letter.

“Mr. Gladstone bids me say that he accepts the compliment you have offered him of the first locomotive engine bearing his name, and we *both* thank you for desiring it.

“I like very much that his constant sympathy with the enterprise should be recognized, for he has ever taken the most lively interest in the Mersey Tunnel Scheme.

“It will not be my fault if the voice should fail upon the return from Scotland. At present there is no such fear; Mr. Gladstone is all health and vigour, thank God.

“Pray present our kind regards to Mrs. Raikes and your daughters.

“Believe me, yours truly,

“CATH. GLADSTONE.”

CHAPTER XXI.

ALTHOUGH preoccupied to a large extent by the complex aspect of the political situation throughout 1885, Mr. Raikes did not relax his efforts on behalf of the Church. He had from early days striven to extend the sphere of her influence in Wales, and in 1884 he felt that the time had come when much good might be effected if the personal influence of some of the great Church dignitaries in England could be brought into active play. He therefore ventured to sound the Archbishop of Canterbury as to his willingness to visit Wales, and to deliver an address, a proceeding which he imagined might be productive of important results so far as the Church herself was concerned.

In reply the Primate intimated that he would come if his presence "were thought really likely to be *useful* in an important attempt to replace the Church fairly before the people of Wales," but his visit would have to be paid after his return from abroad if he were obliged to leave England for a change. (This, it should be stated, was in June, 1884.) The Archbishop further stipulated that the occasion should be

neither political nor simple Church Defence, that it should not be a Diocesan Conference, and that it should have an "avowed object."

The conditions laid down narrowed the field considerably, but it occurred to Mr. Raikes that an address at Lampeter upon the necessity of strengthening and extending that foundation would afford an opportunity of dealing with Church work and the spiritual needs of Wales. This suggestion was warmly welcomed by Dr. Jayne, the present Bishop of Chester, then Principal of the College, but certain obstacles supervened and prevented the project being carried out during 1884. It was not, however, lost sight of, and on February 5, 1885, Dr. Jayne wrote—

"Your kind effort on our behalf last year has borne fruit, at least, indirectly; for the Archbishop of Canterbury has accepted our Visitor's invitation to lay the foundation-stone of our new buildings, and our Degree Day, June 25, has been provisionally chosen for the ceremony. It would be much valued if you could honour us with your presence then."

The ceremony was eventually postponed till the autumn, when it was attended by representative Churchmen from all parts of the principality; and there can be little doubt that the Primate's visit created exactly the impression hoped for by those who were responsible for it.

Early in 1885 Mr. Raikes undertook the laborious task of obtaining statistics relative to the position of the Church in Wales generally.

This he accomplished by sending a printed form,

with spaces to be filled in with the necessary information, to every parish in the Principality. The work of collation and reduction was naturally very heavy, but the results obtained completely repaid him for the labour expended upon the task, and enabled him to put forward a very strong case for the defence when Mr. Dillwyn made his vigorous onslaught upon the Church in Wales in 1886.

The decision of Convocation in 1885 to establish the House of Laymen was very unwelcome to Mr. Raikes. He regarded this step as ill-advised in more than one respect, and, taking into consideration the work already accomplished by the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences, inopportune. As President of the latter body, the existence of which he felt was seriously menaced by the new scheme, it behoved him to walk warily, and before taking any active step he thought it prudent to ascertain how the project was regarded in his own diocese.

After consulting some of those with whom he was most closely identified in Church work, he decided not to oppose the experiment. He determined, however, that he would not become a member of the new House; but, in order to avoid any possibility of friction, he further made up his mind to withdraw from the Presidency of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences, and thus to stand completely aside.

The Parliamentary Session of 1886 was remarkable for two things—the production by Mr. Gladstone of

his scheme of Home Rule for Ireland, and the consequent disruption of the Liberal Party.

Many speculations were indulged in as to the form the measure would take, but even when it was laid before Parliament, and was found to realize the darkest forebodings of the supporters of the Union, there were few, if any, bold enough to predict the ultimate issue. Until Mr. Gladstone played his great stake, matters proceeded much in the usual course. Early in the Session Mr. Dillwyn brought forward a motion declaring that the Church of England in Wales had failed to fulfil its professed objects as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh. This gave Mr. Raikes an opportunity of which he was not slow to take advantage. His contribution to the debate was generally admitted to be the most telling speech that was made from a Churchman's point of view in the course of the discussion. This may well have been the case, for the member for Cambridge University probably possessed a more complete mastery of this particular subject than any one else in the House, with the exception of Mr. Gladstone. Apart from general knowledge, he had the additional advantage of having at his command the statistics which, in anticipation of an attack, he had with so much care and trouble collected from every available parish in Wales during the previous year. His figures had relation to the position of the Church in Wales generally, and dealt more particularly with Elementary and Board Schools; the working of the

Burial Act of 1880; the expenditure of the Church on buildings, etc., during the previous ten years; and the increase of her endowments from private sources.

In the result, the motion met with defeat, as Mr. Albert Gray succeeded in carrying an amendment to it by 241 to 229 votes. A curious feature of the proceedings was that Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chamberlain, and other members of the Government took no part in the division.

On April 8, 1886, Mr. Gladstone laid his Home Rule proposals before the House of Commons. From the outset they met with a dubious reception, and day by day the opposing forces gathered increased strength. It soon became evident that nearly one-third of the Liberal party, headed by some of the ablest men in its ranks, were opposed to the policy of their Chief. No one could tell what the outcome might be, but the belief rapidly grew that Mr. Gladstone would not sit down under a defeat in Parliament, but would, if the House proved recalcitrant, appeal to the country.

On May 18, Mr. Raikes, in a letter to his mother, said—

“It seems to be generally believed that Mr. Gladstone has bullied the Queen into allowing him to dissolve this new-born Parliament. And it seems likely that nearly all June and July will be wasted on another General Election, with a new House of Commons to meet in the end of the latter month or beginning of August, and then—what?”

“It seems hard to believe that the country will return a Parliament pledged to hand over poor Ireland to the crew of rebels and assassins with whom Mr. G—— has now

associated himself. But we seem to be on the brink of a revolution, not merely in Ireland!"

This letter proved to be a tolerably accurate forecast, and on the defeat of the Home Rule Bill, Mr. Gladstone, having secured the assent of the Sovereign, proceeded on the lines indicated in his Midlothian manifesto.

In July, for the second time in nine months, the country was plunged into the throes of a General Election. There was no relaxation of purpose on the part either of the Conservatives or of the Liberal Unionists, and when the battle was over the Unionist majority was found to number more than a hundred.

Mr. Raikes was again returned unopposed.

Towards the end of July, Lord Salisbury undertook the difficult task of forming his second Ministry. Pride of place was given to Lord Randolph Churchill, who was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was entrusted with the leadership in the House of Commons. An unknown quantity was introduced in the person of Mr. Henry Matthews, Q.C., to whom the Home Office was allotted, but most of the old hands were again included in places of more or less dignity and importance.

It was at first pretty generally supposed that Mr. Raikes would be Home Secretary, and he figured, as a rule, in that capacity in most of the lists of probable appointments. But it was not to be, and a *Central News* telegram of July 29 gave the public an inkling of what had been arranged. It ran—

“Lord Salisbury spent most of the forenoon attending to his correspondence. . . . The appearance in Arlington Street of Sir John Gorst and Mr. Henry Matthews, Q.C., coupled with the absence of Mr. Edward Clarke, gave rise to a great deal of speculation. Mr. Cecil Raikes, who was the next caller, had an interview of nearly an hour’s duration with Lord Salisbury, a circumstance which strengthened the general belief at the Carlton that the right hon. gentleman will receive Cabinet rank. It was, indeed, positively stated that Mr. Raikes would be the new Home Secretary, but as a matter of fact, although Mr. Raikes’s claims to the post are officially admitted to be strong, it is not improbable that he may have to waive them in favour of a legal luminary comparatively little known in the political world, compensation being found for the right hon. gentleman elsewhere.”

But Mr. Raikes, before this information was made public, had learnt that the Home Secretaryship was not to come his way. On July 28 Lord Salisbury wrote to him as follows:—

“20, Arlington Street, S.W.,

“July 28, 1886.

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Are you disposed to join us as Postmaster-General? I am very anxious to meet your views. I wish I was in a position to do so more fully. But that is a species of regret which clogs me at every step of the very arduous task in which I am engaged.

“I shall be very glad if we are able to persuade you to associate yourself with us—for the present in this office.

“Believe me yours very truly,

“SALISBURY.”

There is abundance of virtue in a saying clause. The post offered had small attraction for Mr. Raikes,

but between accepting it in full satisfaction, and "for the present," there was a wide difference.

The upshot of his interview with Lord Salisbury on the following day, in the course of which the assurance was repeated that if opportunity offered his views would be more fully met, was that he accepted the post. He fully realized the difficulties of his Chief's position, and, of course, was not blind to the fact that if he were to refuse this office he would probably be throwing away the substance for the shadow, and would cut himself off from any but a remote chance of future advancement.

Further than this, his objections to accepting a place out of the Cabinet, which had been in force the previous year, no longer existed. The Unionist Ministry was sufficiently strong to carry out its policy without relying upon adventitious allies, or making concessions opposed to the true spirit of Constitutionalism. Under these circumstances members of the Government who were not admitted to the inner circle could depend upon the traditions of the party being observed, and banish all fear of being involved in a line of policy dictated by expediency. Consequently, if Mr. Raikes had refused office upon the ground that it was not the one which he personally preferred, his conduct, besides blighting his own prospects, would have evoked little sympathy.

But to him the most mortifying part of the whole affair was that his ambition had been defeated solely, in all human probability, by the introduction of an

entirely unsuspected rival, supported by influence which had been thrown into the scale on his behalf only a year before. Had it again been exerted in his favour there could have been little doubt as to the result.

Where all is conjecture, it is unsafe to enter upon the question of motive. Nevertheless, as was inevitable when Mr. Matthews's appointment became known, men shrugged their shoulders significantly ; for with his name was closely associated the story of the downfall of one of the ablest men on the Liberal benches, a dangerous rival of Lord Randolph's in the affections of the democracy.

While negotiations were proceeding, evidence of Mr. Raikes's popularity with the party generally, was given in a way which must have been very gratifying to him. As the list of Cabinet appointments gradually grew, and no mention of his name appeared, it occurred to a number of leading Conservatives at the Carlton that there might exist an intention of passing him over. So strong was the feeling aroused by this suggestion that a sort of round-robin was drawn up, earnestly requesting the Prime Minister not to lose sight of Mr. Raikes's long and arduous services to the party. This document was signed by a number of influential members, and forwarded to Lord Salisbury.

When it became known that Mr. Raikes had been offered and had accepted the position of Postmaster-General, many of his friends were by no means satisfied, and from several of them he received

letters which savoured rather of condolence than congratulation. The late Sir Alfred Slade wrote—

“I am, as you know, pleased at your getting a place, but I am not satisfied, nor are your friends. You ought to have been in the Cabinet.”

Amongst others, an even more intimate friend, the late Colonel Keith Falconer, wrote in somewhat the same strain :—

“I lose not a post in telling you with what unfeigned satisfaction I see your appointment in the paper. I wish it had been the Home Office, which you would have administered so ably ; still, it is a real pleasure to see that your great services to the party have *at last* been recognized, if inadequately. You are one of my oldest political friends, and I venture to think no one knows your value better than I do. I trust this is only the beginning, and that it will not be long before your merits are rewarded, as they ought to be, by a seat in the Cabinet.”

These and other letters of a like tenor hardly tended to make the recipient more satisfied with his lot, but they were, of course, gratifying from one point of view.

A man who has obtained office does not, as a rule, take into consideration the feelings of other claimants, but it was characteristic of Mr. Raikes that on receiving his appointment he should have written to Lord John Manners (the Duke of Rutland), who had previously occupied this position, in order to ascertain his views. Had Lord John Manners in his reply evinced any preference for his old post, I have little doubt that

Mr. Raikes would have made way for him. The latter's answer, which is typical of that high-minded gentleman, set the matter at rest, however. He wrote—

“Though I hope to have an opportunity to-morrow of talking over G.P.O. matters with you, I must write a line of thanks for your kind letter.

“Your appointment has not, I assure you, been regarded by me with any other feeling than that of satisfaction, and if I can be of any use to you at any time in connection with it, pray command me.”

Mr. Raikes's acceptance of office, of course, vacated his seat; but on August 13 he was again elected without opposition—for the third time within ten months.

On taking up his new duties Mr. Raikes resigned several positions which he had held up to that time. Amongst them was the chair of the Mersey Tunnel Company, which at that time seemed likely to develop into a highly prosperous concern. The railway had been opened to the public on February 1, 1886, and at the half-yearly meeting, held on the 26th of the same month, Mr. Raikes was able to inform the shareholders that in the brief space of time which had elapsed the line had been utilized by over half a million passengers. The tunnel has never proved a commercial success, possibly in consequence of the jealousy of some of the great Railway Companies, but to begin with it was regarded as a most attractive novelty, as many of the public entertained the wildest

ideas on the subject of the method by which the transit was accomplished. At the meeting in question the Chairman gave an amusing example of the popular ignorance on this point. Lifts were used to convey passengers from the stations to the open air, and he mentioned that—

“the other day a passenger came down to the underground station at Liverpool, on the arrival platform, and seeing the lift just going up jumped into it, and when at the top he was much surprised to find he was still at Liverpool, and not at Birkenhead, as he expected.”

Although not greatly enamoured of his new work, Mr. Raikes entered upon it with the firm intention of devoting himself to the improvement of the service and the interests of the public at large; and throughout his career at the Post Office he kept those objects steadily before him.

It did not take him long to learn the official duties of his position, and then, with that infinite patience which was one of his chief characteristics, he set himself down to master the inner workings of the great department over which he was called upon to preside. His power of rapidly yet thoroughly comprehending a strange subject, of stripping it of unnecessary complications, and working through the technicalities which so often conceal the true object aimed at from the untrained eye, stood him in good stead here; and his ready appreciation of the value of obscure points which, isolated, seemed to be negligible quantities, but in combination tended to

consolidate and strengthen the particular line of policy which the Department thought fit to pursue, quite early in his career compelled the, at first unwilling, admiration of the highly trained officials with whom he was associated.

I propose to deal hereafter with the details of his career at the Post Office, and the difficulties which he encountered within and without. It is unnecessary, therefore, before quoting a portion of the speech delivered by Sir Arthur Blackwood at the dinner held in celebration of the Jubilee of Penny Postage in January, 1890, to say more than that his testimony as to Mr. Raikes's gifts is of special value in view of the fact that previous to its delivery relations between the Postmaster-General and the Chief Secretary had more than once been strained almost to breaking-point. The passage of the speech to which I venture to refer, runs as follows :—

“It is a happy coincidence that the Post Office, which is nothing if not a literary department, should have at its head the representative of one of the most famous seats of learning and letters in the world; and not less fortunate are we in having as the Minister responsible to the country for our service one who, by his tact and courtesy, no less than his ability, is so successful in his Parliamentary conduct of the business of the Post Office.

“It has been my lot to communicate instruction—or, perhaps, I ought to say, lest I unduly magnify my office, to supply information—to several Postmasters-General, and, without any reflection on his predecessors, two of whom we are proud to have with us this evening, I may say that I have never met with any one who more rapidly or more completely

mastered the complicated details of our very intricate system. There is not one of those details with which the present Postmaster-General is not conversant, and I may add—what is perhaps of greater importance—there is not one of the 100,000 people over whom he presides whose interests he is not anxious to promote whenever he can legitimately do so, and for whose welfare he is not solicitous.”

The outside world have but a limited conception of the authority concentrated in the hands of the permanent officials of the various departments of the State. These are the real power behind the throne, and with them it generally rests to make or mar the reputations of the administrators who loom large in the public eye.

The ordinary Parliamentarian without special training, when confronted with a man like the late Sir Arthur Blackwood, for instance, at least his equal in ability, and ten times his superior in knowledge, has little chance of obtaining his own way unless it happens to coincide with the policy of his preceptor.

Some ministers remain in ignorance of this fact throughout their term ; others are content to acquiesce in a state of things which is not without its advantages. The members of these two classes are generally known as “safe” men. Others, again, endeavour spasmodically to assert their authority, but their want of knowledge, as a rule, stands in their way, and after one or two unpleasant experiences their views are imperceptibly directed into the desired channel. This class resemble the child who, permitted to hold the loose end of the reins, oblivious of the firm hand which grasps them a little lower down, imagines that

he is guiding the chariot, and revels in his own dexterity. "Able" is here the proper word to apply.

But the man who is anxious to make a name for himself, and clever enough to originate a plan or to grasp the possibilities of any suggested to him, is, perhaps, the easiest of all for the official class to deal with. At his instance some scheme which will appeal to the people at large is formulated. He throws himself into it heart and soul, fights for it in Parliament, devises improvements in it, devotes his whole time to it. In the office he is of little account, for he rarely interferes with its policy; with the public he is, of course, a favourite, and, perhaps rightly, gains credit as a brilliant and far-seeing administrator.

Truly they are a wonderful power in the land, these great permanent officials! Practically they govern the country, for they seldom deviate from their course unless they find in their temporary Chief a will-power which raises him far above the average, combined with a knowledge which rivals their own, or, in default of this, that rare genius which alone can dispense with all ordinary qualifications.

It follows that, real genius apart, even those politicians whose talents are of a high order will find it easier (and in the end, perhaps, more profitable) to shine with reflected lustre than to dominate their own offices. For the accomplishment of this latter feat, strength of character alone is not always sufficient. The man who relies solely upon it, is almost certain to get into difficulties. To it must be added a marked

capacity for, and a dogged perseverance in, assimilating theory and detail alike, which will, in time, enable the student to meet his preceptor on fairly equal terms. Then, if the first trial of strength results in his favour, he may, perhaps, carry the day.

But the fight will be a bitter one, and the fruits of victory, perhaps, unsatisfying.

CHAPTER XXII.

WHEN Mr. Raikes entered upon his duties as Postmaster-General in 1886, he found himself, at the outset, confronted by a question of no ordinary difficulty.

Partly in consequence of Parliamentary agitation, and partly because it was thought advisable to try the effect of competition, it had been decided to terminate the contract under which the American Mails had, up to that time, been conveyed; and when Mr. Raikes came into office he found that notice to this effect had been given shortly before.

The companies concerned were the Cunard, the White Star Line, and the Inman; and under the old contract they conveyed the mails three times a week, at the rate of 4*s.* per pound for letters, and 4*d.* per pound for newspapers.

The day fixed for the reception of new tenders was October 1, and the terms suggested were that the Post Office should be at liberty to select the fastest ships sailing from any port, and to make payment at the rate of 3*s.* per pound for letters, and 3*d.* per pound for newspapers.

The Secretary of the Post Office, Mr. Blackwood, took a somewhat pessimistic view of the situation.

He felt little doubt that the Cunard and White Star Line held the key of the position—the Inman, it may be mentioned, was expected to drop out altogether—and he plainly foresaw the outbursts of frenzied patriotism which would hail the employment of the North German Lloyds, the only formidable competitor, and the consequent transference of a portion of the service from Queenstown to Southampton.

The Cunard and White Star were also so strongly of opinion that they could dictate their own terms that, instead of attempting even to meet the Post Office half-way, they calmly tendered at the old rates for a bi-weekly service only.

To have accepted this offer would have been obviously a retrograde step; on the other hand, to have refused it outright, and to have broken off relations, would have placed the Post Office in a serious difficulty; for without the co-operation of the two companies mentioned it would have been impossible to organize an effective service at short notice. The negotiations were, therefore, kept alive, and after a time the Cunard and White Star reduced their terms for letters to 3s. 6d., whilst adhering to their offer of a bi-weekly service on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

On November 1 Mr. Blackwood wrote, in rather peremptory terms, to inform Mr. Raikes that the Treasury “will only waste time by telling us to try and get better terms. Of that there is no prospect. It must be either yes or no.”

This letter throws a valuable sidelight upon the Secretary's general attitude at that time, and makes it fairly evident that he was in the habit of assuming that in important questions the decision rested with him rather than with the Postmaster-General.

The latter, however, showed no disposition to submit to dictation, and, being in entire accord with the views of the Treasury, insisted that not only must the tri-weekly service be maintained, but that the companies must accept a reduction in rates. In this he was supported by the Cabinet, who decided that a three-day service was a *sine quâ non*.

The Postmaster-General thereupon inquired whether the companies would arrange for service on Thursdays and Saturdays, leaving Tuesdays to be filled up in any manner the Department thought fit. The managers, fearing an infringement of their monopoly, declined to entertain this idea, and vouchsafed no direct reply to a further suggestion that they should carry full mail on Thursday and part mail on Saturday in conjunction with other companies, but, instead, tendered for a three-day service—Tuesday to Boston, Thursday and Saturday to New York; all vessels to touch at Queenstown.

Mr. Raikes, however, having carried forbearance to an extreme limit, had by this time arranged with the North German Lloyds to carry Tuesday's mails, and as the two great companies entirely refused to act with any other, negotiations came abruptly to a close, and it was announced that henceforth their ships

would not touch at Queenstown on the outward voyage.

On this the storm burst in full fury. Mr. Raikes was inundated with resolutions passed by various public bodies in Ireland, Liverpool, and elsewhere, and letters without number. The papers, too, joined in the assault, and, to use an expressive colloquialism, "waved the flag" energetically.

Besides the attacks of opponents, the indignation of a section of the public, and the lukewarmness of his chief official adviser, Mr. Raikes had the remonstrances of his friends to reckon with.

On the 29th, after matters had reached a crisis, Sir G. Baden-Powell wrote to complain that—

"politically large numbers of our supporters are very vexed to find her Majesty's mails entrusted to a foreign company, hampered by none of the restrictions our Legislature places on English built and owned vessels."

Other M.P.s urged that the action taken would lose seats at Liverpool; and even Lord Salisbury remarked in a letter, "I am not very fond of your mail contract."

Such expressions of opinion naturally carried more weight than the excited abuse of interested parties or of political opponents, and might well have caused a weaker man to waver.

But Mr. Raikes entertained no thoughts of surrender; his preparations were all made, and he stood quietly on the defensive, awaiting the moment to strike. He was well backed up by Mr. Jackson, the

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and some others of his colleagues. A provisional arrangement for three months with the North German Lloyds (whose ships, it may be mentioned, were for the most part built in England and manned by Englishmen), the Inman, and others, averted any fear of an actual deadlock, and made it evident that the Postmaster-General was in deadly earnest in his effort to break down the monopoly enjoyed by the Cunard and White Star.

Mr. Jackson dealt with the matter at Leeds on November 27, and really put the case in a nutshell:—

“The Cunard, therefore, said in fact, ‘Unless we have a complete and absolute monopoly of the whole of the mails from this country to America we will carry none of them. We will give you no help in any respect.’ . . . This matter had now been settled for three months,* and if at the end of that time the astute men who were at the head of this combination succeeded in inducing the public to support them in getting a complete monopoly and £25,000 into the bargain, then they would have been very clever, and the public would have no reason to complain.”

The sum of £25,000 per annum, it may be noted, represented the difference between the terms demanded by the companies and those offered by the Post Office.

The Postmaster-General, irrespective of contract, had the power to despatch certain classes of letters by any ship he might select; and it was by the exercise of this right that matters were finally brought to a head.

* By the provisional arrangement referred to above.

The companies, who had miscalculated Mr. Raikes's powers of resistance, and had evidently imagined that he would be unable to withstand the pressure brought to bear, grew perhaps somewhat impatient. At any rate, the Cunard, having publicly announced that they would collect consignees' letters themselves, proceeded to do so in defiance of the law. Further than this, when the Post Office made a formal tender of mails consisting of consignees' and other letters for conveyance by the *Umbria*, the general superintendent of the company, not content with a protest, refused to allow them to be placed on board. This proved to be a false step on the company's part, and enabled the Postmaster-General to assume the offensive. He promptly carried the matter to the Courts, and asked for an injunction to restrain the Cunard from committing breaches of the law. This the company were unable to resist, and intimated through their counsel, Sir Charles Russell, that they would receive mails as usual until the motion came on for argument a few days later.

As the conflict approached its final stage, the outcry in the Press redoubled, and caused serious alarm in the breasts of various leading members of the Government. The companies, who at first had little doubt of their capacity to crush a too officious minister, were now fighting desperately for their monopoly, which they could not but feel was slipping from their grasp. With admirable intelligence they availed themselves to the full of the patriotic spirit of their

countrymen, and to the ordinary observer it looked as though they had behind them the full force of popular opinion. They succeeded, even, in making some impression on Lord Salisbury, who, on December 4, in a letter on the subject of the provisional contract, did not hesitate to say—

“I should have been disposed to recommend the other course, mainly on the ground of the unpopularity of employing a foreign line.”

The words “foreign line” made a splendid cry. Raised first of all by the people directly interested, it was promptly taken up by those who hoped to weaken the Government by striking at one of its members. In their wake followed a large section of the ever-easily-stirred public, who in their ill-informed patriotism shouted themselves hoarse in support of those whose main object, to put it quite frankly, was to drive as hard a bargain as possible for their own benefit at the expense of their admirers.

The Admiralty had taken a keen interest in the struggle from the first, and presently they stepped forward with a proposal which has since borne valuable fruit. It had occurred to them that when fresh tenders were invited at the termination of the temporary contract, they might be afforded the opportunity of carrying out a scheme for securing the services of the fastest Atlantic boats as cruisers in war-time, if matters could be put in train at this juncture. Accordingly, after consultation with Lord Salisbury, Lord George Hamilton invited Mr. Raikes to preside

over a small committee, consisting of Messrs. Jackson and Forwood, in order that the question might be considered.

From this point matters went more smoothly. The recalcitrant companies had by this time been driven to realize that the Postmaster-General had proved too strong for them. In spite of public and private pressure, he had broken up their monopoly, which even his own advisers had deemed impregnable; and it remained for them, therefore, either to accept the situation, tempered by the proposals of the Admiralty, or to cut themselves off entirely from all prospective advantages.

It is hardly surprising that they should have decided not to throw away the substance for the shadow. The Government, nevertheless, it seems, were nervous up to the last moment, and must have felt considerably relieved when the matter was finally settled.

On February 7, 1887, Mr. Raikes made the following statement in the House of Commons in reply to a question put by Mr. Gourley:—

“I am glad to be able to inform the hon. member that I have concluded arrangements with two British companies, the Cunard and the Oceanic (White Star) Companies, for the conveyance of mails *via* Queenstown to New York by their best ships throughout the year, in winter as well as summer. The price to be paid for letters is 3*s.* per pound, and for newspapers 3*d.* per pound, as compared with 4*s.* per pound for letters and 4*d.* per pound for newspapers under the old contract. The despatch will take place every Wednesday and Saturday night, and in addition to these two regular

despatches, the Post Office will send mails by other fast steamers either from Queenstown or Southampton. As the names of the ships sailing are not commonly known to the public, it has been arranged that letters can be marked *Inman* or *Germanic* when intended for those steamers. The plan will practically give four mails a week from this country to America—Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday—besides the occasional chance of sending by such fast steamers as the *Alaska*, the *Arizona*, and the *City of Rome*, in the case of specially superscribed letters; and I think this will satisfy all reasonable requirements.”

The completeness of his victory was emphasized by the following note in the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

“The English Post Office has now almost reached the standard of the New York Post Office in the despatch of mails by every fast and sufficiently equipped line of steamers, and the day of monopoly has gone by. From the first we have maintained that Mr. Raikes’s course was the right and proper one, and this excellent result shows conclusively how right he was. The public inconvenience has been slight and temporary; the public gain will be enormous and permanent.”

The same paper paid a proper tribute to the Admiralty, which, it remarked, had acted in the cruiser question “with equal intelligence and despatch. But,” the article continues, “if Mr. Raikes had not proved ‘cussed’ about the mail contracts they would probably not have had the opportunity.”

Thus auspiciously ended Mr. Raikes’s first great struggle on behalf of the public. From first to last he neither lost confidence nor threw away a chance. It seemed impossible to ruffle his composure, and even when he was taunted with being the cause of

Mr. Goschen's want of success at Liverpool in January, 1887, he wrote, at length, more in sorrow than in anger at the stupidity of his accusers—

“As for the often-told tale of Mr. Goschen's defeat at Liverpool, it is sufficient to point out that at the very moment when the policy of the Post Office was supposed to be most unpopular in Liverpool, Mr. Goschen succeeded in considerably increasing the Conservative poll in the most commercial part of the town, and in reducing the majority, which had exceeded one hundred a few months before against an exceptionally strong Conservative candidate, to seven.”

The exigencies of the political situation in 1886 kept members in London till late in September. An extract from a letter, written by Mr. Raikes on the 16th of that month, evidently when he was in a despondent mood, shows how sorely he chafed at his forced detention:—

“Here I have been protracting a miserable existence between an office which I like perhaps less every day and a House of Commons which I have come cordially to detest. However, as I am too busy every night to listen to the debaters, I have at least the negative satisfaction of not being actively bored by the orators, although it is dismal enough to linger here till 3 or 4 a.m. to answer to the division bell about every half-hour.

“My real grievance, however, is not against the political penal servitude, which I suppose I deserve, but to think that it is robbing me of the last month—never to be recovered, never to return—of the sweet unsophisticated innocence of my dearest and youngest playfellows. Of course, they must go to be made rough and hard like the young cubs with whom they will have to struggle through life—I know that; but this makes it all the bitterer to lose the last days of them as they have been and still are.”

He succeeded, however, in reaching home in time to celebrate his silver wedding on September 26. A day or two later, accompanied by Mrs. Raikes and two of his daughters, he started for a tour in the West of England, over the same ground which he had traversed during his honeymoon twenty-five years before. The little party were joined at intervals by Mr. Raikes's old school and college friend, Dr. E. C. Clark, and seem, in spite of unfavourable weather, to have enjoyed their expedition thoroughly. Their general proceedings are summed up as follows in a letter from Mr. Raikes to his son Henry, dated October 11:—

“We have been having a very cheery time, one day chiefly differing from another (1) in the comparative sublimity of the scenery; (2) in the quantity of rain absorbed by our persons and habiliments; and (3) by the weight and dimensions of the Devonshire cream absorbed respectively by the members of our party, of whom L—— is, I think, first, though I confess to being a pretty good second.”

The reaction in Mr. Raikes's spirits appears to have been complete, and he returned to his work in a thoroughly invigorated condition, as the managers of the great steamship lines shortly discovered, to their cost. He addressed several political meetings in November, and at one of them, Neath, he gave utterance to a public confession of faith in Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, for whose rugged honesty and force of character he had the greatest admiration. He did not anticipate that Lord Randolph's reign would be

a long one, and with some confidence used to predict that his successor would be Sir Michael. But for the latter's weak state of health it is extremely probable that this prophecy would have been fulfilled. Holding such views as these, one can hardly be surprised that when Lord Randolph Churchill suddenly threw up the leadership of the House, just before Christmas, Mr. Raikes should have strongly urged the then Irish Secretary not to stand aside again.

Lord Randolph's resignation will ever be memorable, apart from the circumstances which impelled him to send it in, for its suddenness, and for the mode in which he thought fit to make it known.

As a rule, the papers did not reach Llwynegrin till nearly lunch-time; but it happened that on the morning of the 23rd Mr. Raikes walked down to the little town of Mold. He was not long left in ignorance of what had occurred, for a worthy tradesman dashed at him with his newly arrived copy of the *Times*, breathless with anxiety to learn whether the news were true. There seemed to be little room for doubt, and it was not long before Mr. Raikes had left for the scene of action, London. To him, apart from the general question, this derangement of the Government meant a great deal. He had gently sounded Lord Salisbury when Mr. Arthur Balfour was raised to Cabinet rank in November, and had had no reason to be dissatisfied with the reply he then received. Under the special circumstances of the case he could

hardly regard himself as having been passed over. But now the scope of possibilities was much wider. There must, perforce, be a reconstruction of the Cabinet, and he was largely justified in supposing that if any vacancies occurred one of them would fall to his share.

It may be permissible at this point to glance briefly at the reasons which influenced Lord Randolph Churchill in arriving at his decision. These are more or less common property, but the following letter from Sir Alfred Slade, written on December 23, 1886, will be read with interest :—

“Lord R.’s resignation has taken almost every one by surprise ; he only decided on it yesterday. The final dispute was about Army and Navy, and it came to this, either G. Hamilton, C. Beresford, and, I believe, Smith, would have gone, or Lord R. must give way. In a fit of petulance he resigned. His reasons were given at length in a letter to Lord Salisbury, which will, I suppose, be read in the House.

“Blackburne has resigned. I hear it is offered to Mac-naughten ; if he does not take it I think Matthews will. You are talked of as going into the Cabinet. Gorst thinks you will be Home Secretary if Matthews goes.

“The Anti-Randolphites are exuberant. The London penny Press is very angry at the *Times* getting the sole information. I am told that some of his colleagues in the Cabinet did not know it until they read the *Times*.

“Altogether, the way it has been done, and the reasons, viz. Army and Navy, will not increase his popularity. I should like to hear your views.

“I have had a long talk with a man whom R. consulted, and who tried to dissuade him. It almost looks like a case of *Quem Deus vult*, etc.”

If anything, the Unionist party was a gainer by the substitution of Mr. Goschen at the Exchequer; while in Mr. Smith it found a leader who, at any rate, was never a source of anxiety. The latter gentleman, though he hardly pretended to be a statesman, and entirely lacked the brilliancy of his predecessor, to a large extent made up for his want of great qualities by his sound common sense. That he was often over-cautious cannot be doubted, but he never led the party into difficulties, and was careful, where possible, to avoid giving offence. In this particular he differed widely from Lord Randolph, whose quickness of temper frequently led him to speak unadvisedly, or, at any rate, sharply, with his tongue. This feature of the latter's disposition is well illustrated by an amusing incident which occurred during his brief tenure of office.

One day in the lobby, a member, whom we will call H., was holding forth upon "Randolph's" management of business. "He doesn't understand us," H. asserted; "he's going all wrong, and ought to be told." "Tell him yourself," suggested a friend. Mr. H. was a little taken aback on receiving this direct challenge, but presently, pulling himself together, he accepted it, and went off to seek an interview. This in due course was granted, and Mr. H., who is by no means devoid of assurance, expounded his grievances at length. His leader meanwhile sat playing with his moustache, but when the flow of words had ended he looked up blandly and inquired, "Is that all?" "Yes," replied Mr. H., "I think so."

"Then," said Lord Randolph, "let me ask you a question. Are you the leader of the Conservative party or am I?" For a moment he paused for a reply which came not, and then rising to his feet with a sudden outburst of fury, he shouted, "Go to h——, sir!"

This terminated the interview.

The Government took no immediate action upon Lord Randolph's resignation, although active negotiations were at once set on foot. To some of its members the time seemed ripe for the formation of a "Hartington combination," and this idea was strongly favoured by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, amongst others. He wrote at some length to Mr. Raikes to explain his view of the situation, but his letter, although of much interest, is so essentially of a private nature that I do not feel justified in reproducing any part of it. But although, for reasons which he gave, the Irish Secretary declined to put himself forward for the leadership of the House, Mr. Raikes did not give up the hope that his scruples might be overcome, and was not backward in urging other influential members of the party to throw their weight into the scale. Sir Michael's determination, however, was not, it seems, to be shaken, and his partisans had their trouble for their pains.

It soon became evident that as few changes as possible were to be made. It was at first supposed that Mr. Matthews would be unlikely to retain his post after the disappearance of his leader, and would probably exchange the political arena for a seat on

the Bench. Mr. Raikes undoubtedly shared in this belief, but any hopes he may have nourished were speedily dashed by a letter from Lord Halsbury, who informed him that the Home Secretary had no idea of leaving the Cabinet.

The arrangements eventually made must be admitted to have worked passably in practice, but they gave little satisfaction to the Postmaster-General. He was fully conscious of Mr. Goschen's abilities, but he disliked at the time, and never succeeded in reconciling himself to Mr. Smith's appointment as leader of the House. So far as he personally was concerned, the crisis had been fraught with disappointment; for his period of probation, in place of being brought to a close, was, it seemed, in a fair way of being indefinitely extended.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It has been mentioned already that it did not take Mr. Raikes very long to discover that the scope of his authority in the Post Office was very strictly limited. As a matter of fact, the internal policy of the department was guided entirely by the permanent officials, of whom Mr. Blackwood, himself something of an autocrat, was the head; and this gentleman made it plain from the first that he was indisposed to brook the slightest interference with his sway. The official spiring was accomplished, as a rule, with due consideration for the nominal chief's feelings, but his impotence, though concealed from him as far as possible, was none the less real on that account.

It was impossible for a man of Mr. Raikes's character and disposition to tolerate such a position for one moment longer than he could help. To begin with, he made one or two tentative efforts to assert himself, only to find the ground cut away from under his feet. But for some months he may be said to have contented himself with feeling his way, for he had no desire to try a fall before he had mastered, at any rate, the routine management of the machine entrusted to him. He was well aware that a trial of

strength at too early a stage would have left him at the mercy of his opponent, whether he were successful in the first instance or not. Nevertheless, he did not for one moment falter in his purpose, and by the time he had disposed of the American Mail business (in which he had been granted practically a free hand), he felt prepared to take advantage of any opportunity which might offer itself. As matters turned out, he had not long to wait.

In February, 1887, it became necessary to fill up a vacancy among the first-class clerks, and the Secretary recommended that the gentleman who stood fourth in the second-class should be promoted over the heads of his three senior colleagues. On making inquiry, it was admitted on all hands that the first of these did not possess the qualifications required in the first-class, but the Postmaster-General was informed that the second was a competent and deserving officer. He thereupon determined to exercise the powers vested in him. He declined point-blank to promote a junior over the head of a qualified senior, and, passing by the nomination of the Secretary, raised the gentleman who stood second in the class to the class above.

It was subsequently stated that the clerk promoted was a relation of Mr. Raikes's. Such was not the case. As a matter of fact, although Mr. —— was distantly connected by marriage with Mrs. Raikes, the Postmaster-General had never heard of him before this time, and had no acquaintance with any member

of his family. Apart from any question of morality, it is ridiculous to suppose that a man of Mr. Raikes's experience in affairs would, even had he been personally interested in the officer's fortunes, which he was not, deliberately have placed himself in an untenable position by promoting an incapable person. Indeed, I will go further, and venture to assert that the fortuitous circumstance of distant connection would rather have told against any individual, as to whose qualifications Mr. Raikes entertained a doubt, than in his favour. In this particular instance the Postmaster-General was guided in the action he took by his determination not to suffer what seemed to him an act of injustice to be perpetrated.

This sudden assertion of authority naturally brought forth a protest from Mr. Blackwood, who indignantly insisted that promotion into the first class was "by merit;" that in the opinion of himself, "the permanent head of the service," and the other secretaries, his nominee was best qualified for promotion; and that Mr. Raikes could not know as much about the merits of the second-class clerks as he did. One phrase in his somewhat lengthy letter afterwards became of importance in view of the Press attacks upon the Postmaster-General. It ran—

"The promotion of an officer in such circumstances" (*i.e.* against the wish of the Secretary) "cannot fail to expose a Postmaster-General to most unfavourable criticism."

The office positively seethed with excitement when it became known that the Postmaster-General had put

his foot down, had disregarded a recommendation of the Secretary's, and had refused to reconsider his decision.

In the Secretary's department, especially, there was much heart-searching. Who was this Parliamentary official that he should decline to be bound by tradition, and venture to show that he had a will of his own? Mr. Blackwood must be supported, and the new-comer taught who was really supreme at St. Martin's-le-Grand. It would seem that the Press was the first ally enlisted, for after an article had appeared in the *Daily News* of February 26, the cry was taken up in a number of other journals. Many of these indulged in the wildest language and the most shameful calumnies; while a political aspect was given to the matter by the promulgation of charges which, in addition to being utterly untrue, had no relation to the point actually in dispute.

Mr. Raikes, as usual, took matters quietly. He was well aware that his attempt to curb the power of the permanent officials would meet with a sturdy resistance, and, though he had hardly anticipated the dead-set which was made at him by the papers, he was not to be turned from his purpose by their frantic efforts. His mental attitude is plainly indicated in a letter to his mother, dated February 27, in which he remarked—

“All my department is in mutiny because I choose not to be a mere cypher, and act upon my own opinion when I have one. I hope, however, if all is well, to teach them that they have got a master at last.”

On March 1 the *Pall Mall Gazette* published a violent article against the Postmaster-General, and the same evening Mr. T. Blake and Mr. Conybeare put questions raising similar points to the Postmaster-General in the House of Commons, and thus unintentionally afforded him an opportunity of exposing the absurdity of the allegations.

Although it was clearly demonstrated, time and again, that the only thing that could be urged against Mr. Raikes was that in the exercise of his undoubted prerogative he had refused to promote a nominee of the Secretary's over the head of a qualified senior, the hubbub in the Press grew worse and worse. The *Pall Mall Gazette* * continued to print paragraph after paragraph of the most insulting and misleading nature; and other journals, which it is unnecessary to specify at this distance of time, indulged in similar vilification.

Belief in the honesty and accuracy of our Press is widespread, and it is easy to see that the constant repetition of statements which can only be described as grotesque falsehoods must by degrees have created a very unfavourable impression on the public in general. The infection even spread to some of the better-class journals, and it was presently freely rumoured that Lord Salisbury himself was likely to take action.

It can be urged on behalf of Mr. Blackwood that in the heat of a struggle it is not always easy to repudiate useful allies (even though their services be

* Then under Mr. Stead's management.

unsought) upon the ground that they have committed excesses which one's calmer judgment would condemn. Nevertheless, it is strange that a man of his perception and knowledge of the world should not have realized that his seeming acquiescence in the discreditable manœuvres of his supporters, coupled with his close connection with one of the least scrupulous of them, and his prophetic intimation a few days earlier, would in turn lay him open to obvious and severe reproach. The explanation, possibly, is to be found in the fact that able, high-minded, and experienced though he was, there was blended with his more practical characteristics a vein of simplicity. This latter quality added greatly to his natural charm, but it had on occasion, as in this instance, the disadvantage of rendering him oblivious of the possibility of an unfavourable interpretation being placed upon his actions, however strongly circumstances might seem to warrant it.

Meanwhile, it had come to the Postmaster-General's knowledge that an address of sympathy, signed by a number of officials, had been offered to Mr. Blackwood, and had been accepted by him. This, in itself, constituted a grave breach of discipline, and Mr. Raikes had no alternative but to ask for a copy of the document, which was forthwith furnished to him. Under the circumstances of the case he was inclined to pass the matter over as lightly as possible, as he had no desire to rekindle the embers of a controversy in which, by Mr. Blackwood's submission, he had gained all that he had striven for. But the affair had

somehow got to the ears of an enterprising member, who, on March 7—the very day on which Mr. Raikes had received the Secretary's submission—asked the following question in the House of Commons :—

“Whether it was a fact that the Secretary to the Post Office was presented with and received an address of sympathy from certain officials in the General Post Office in connection with a difference of opinion between him and the Postmaster-General, and whether this did not constitute a serious breach of discipline?”

To this Mr. Raikes, evidently with a desire to minimize the importance of the matter as far as possible, replied—

“The Secretary has at my request communicated to me the address to which the question refers, and though I cannot regard the proceeding as regular, I am inclined to attach to it rather an officious than an official character. I should be sorry to consider the matter as one of sufficient importance to warrant disciplinary notice. If I have to take official cognizance of it I should consult the head of the Government before determining upon my course of action.”

The First Lord of the Treasury entertained a more serious view of the question than the Postmaster-General. He considered that it affected the discipline of the whole of the Civil Service, and consequently took steps which resulted in the following letter being written :—

“ March 9, 1887.

“ DEAR MR. RAIKES,

“As I learn that you are not coming to the Post Office to-day, I write to say that, at the request of the First Lord of the Treasury, conveyed to me through the Chancellor

of the Exchequer, I beg leave to withdraw the minute, submitting to you the communication made to me by the officers of my office, relative to the recent promotions.

“Yours truly,

“S. A. BLACKWOOD.”

The struggle for supremacy within the Post Office was over. Outside, the agitation was continued in the Press with diminishing fervour for a short time; but when Mr. Raikes got his supplementary estimates through without being seriously attacked, and with little difficulty, it became obvious to all save the most prejudiced that there could in reality be little to urge against him.

In the course of the year—the year of the Queen’s Jubilee—it was decided that certain honours should be distributed among civil servants of the higher grades. Mr. Blackwood was one of those singled out for promotion, and it was proposed, subject to the approval of the Postmaster-General, to raise him to the rank of K.C.B. As a necessary preliminary to any such step being taken, the papers were laid before Mr. Raikes for his assent. This he gave as a matter of course. A few days later he received a visit from Mr. Blackwood, who in a somewhat agitated manner thanked him for his action in the matter. Mr. Raikes, who was genuinely surprised and touched, hastened to explain that, in view of Mr. Blackwood’s long and distinguished career in the Civil Service, it had never occurred to him that he would be justified in putting any obstacle in the way of his promotion, even

had he desired to do so. "I thought," replied Mr. Blackwood, nearly breaking down, "that in consequence of what has recently passed between us you would have felt justified in acting in a different way." Mr. Raikes's answer was to the effect that, although there had been a difference of opinion between them, that did not in any way detract from the value of Mr. Blackwood's services to the country, and that he himself would never dream of letting personal considerations influence his decision in a matter of this kind.

This story was told to the present writer by Mr. Raikes himself, and when he had finished his narrative he added, after a slight pause, half sadly, half humorously, "It is curious what narrow views really good men like Blackwood seem to have about ordinary affairs. From his standpoint I am a mere worldling, and he cannot understand why I should refrain from taking a petty revenge upon him, when opportunity offers, in return for the trouble he has caused me at the office."

There can, however, be little doubt that this episode drew the two men more closely together, and led to a better mutual understanding. During the remainder of Mr. Raikes's term of office differences arose now and again (as was inevitable) between himself and the Secretary, but they never reached a really serious point. And, more than this, in times of difficulty, as, for instance, in the great strike which occurred a few years later, Mr. Raikes was destined to learn with what loyalty and devotion the Secretary could support a chief for whom he had both liking and respect.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE year 1887 opened sadly in the political world. The death of Lord Iddesleigh on January 12, two days after his retirement from the Foreign Office on the reconstruction of the Cabinet, aroused a feeling of sorrow which was well-nigh universal.

Endowed with great natural ability, refined, courteous, highly trained, as he was, Sir Stafford Northcote (as it seems more natural to call him) lacked something of those sturdier characteristics which are called for in a leader of the House of Commons, whether in Office or in Opposition. In truth, by nature and disposition, he was a Statesman rather than a Parliamentarian. But the very qualities which told against him as a chief endeared him to members at large—to his own followers and opponents alike. And I think that none loved him (and I use the word advisedly) more dearly than those who were at times tempted to rebel when he appeared to push conciliation to the verge of weakness. Amongst these must be numbered Mr. Raikes: and yet, in spite of occasional outbursts of impatience, none were more quick than he to recognize at its full value the tender sensitiveness which shrank from inflicting pain, or

pressing too hard upon a demoralized foe ; the gentle courtesy, which so oft succeeded in smoothing the plumage of ruffled self-esteem, and rendered all intercourse with its possessor a pleasure and a privilege ; and the lofty rectitude which disdained to stoop to the exercise of even legitimate Parliamentary tactics, or to seize the opportunities which chance might throw in his way. Truly, it may be said that by the death of Lord Idedesleigh, England lost one of the noblest of her sons.

* * * * *

The Session of 1887 was, in the main, devoted to Ireland, and no time could be found for the introduction of the promised Tithe Bill, a measure in which Mr. Raikes took the deepest interest. The question of Procedure was, however, once more to the fore, and on February 2 Mr. Smith, in his capacity of leader of the House, wrote to Mr. Raikes as follows :—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Will you be kind enough to be ready to take an active part in the discussion on Procedure? It is essentially your own subject, and your authority will be recognized by the House. I hope you were consulted before the Government adopted the proposals which are now on the table, but whether that is so or not, I rely with great confidence on your valuable assistance.

“Believe me, yours very sincerely,

“W. H. SMITH.”

Mr. Smith, it would appear, had an inkling that Lord Randolph Churchill, his predecessor, had not

taken the ex-Chairman of Committees into his confidence, and wished to make it plain that he had had no hand in making the arrangements in the first instance. Mr. Raikes, as it happened, had keenly felt the slight, and was not much flattered at being called upon at the last moment. His leader's homely attempt at consolation in the next letter, dated February 4, is from one point of view rather amusing:—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Randolph had charge of the Procedure Resolutions, and we assumed that he had consulted all the authorities on the subject. It is, however, no use crying over spilt milk, and we must deal with the situation as it exists; but if you will come and see me here or in my room at the House I shall be very glad to talk to you on the subject.

“Meanwhile, I have requested that a memorandum which has been voluntarily drawn up by Palgrave shall be sent to you.

“Yours very truly,

“W. H. SMITH.”

Mr. Raikes's real interest in the question, and the knowledge that the Government regarded his active support as of great importance, speedily dispelled his momentary feeling of pique, and he lent willing and valuable assistance in the subsequent proceedings.

His work during the early part of the year appears to have left him small leisure for letter-writing, but in spite of the harassing nature of his duties he seems to have kept in fair spirits. On February 27, in a letter to his mother, he wrote with the delight of battle still fresh upon him—

“I am in political hot water again, and rather enjoy it, as the routine work of my office is a weariness of the flesh. Last Monday I think I may claim to have fairly demolished Sir W. V. Harcourt, and to-morrow he is going to lead the assault against me, though I think he has a very poor case indeed.”

It is worth noting that the previous day had witnessed the outbreak of hostilities in reference to the promotion in the Post Office already referred to, both in the Press and in Parliament.

In a letter to his mother, dated April 2, Mr. Raikes gives an interesting account of the first use of the Closure against Mr. Gladstone, in whose fertile brain this method of restraining exuberant oratory had originated. He wrote—

“The scene of last night is so fresh in my mind that I can hardly think of anything else, and, indeed, if I were to live another fifty years its recollection would, I think, still stir a sort of nervous vibration of the strange passion and excitement of that historic occasion. The Gladstonian party now stand so frankly committed to revolutionary proceedings as well as principles, that it is indeed a comfort to think that the new era has shown them to be so decidedly in a minority. For if Mr. Gladstone were ever again in power at the head of the faction he now leads, it is pretty clear that no tradition or consideration would be allowed to stay his reckless career. When he walked out of the House last night at the head of his myrmidons, after his own Speaker had applied his own device of Closure to his obstructive proceedings, I felt it really painful to see such a miserable conclusion of so striking a history. He tried to preserve his own dignity, but he looked to me rather like Mr. Pecksniff leaving a meeting where he had been shown to be a defaulter. And the enthusiastic acclamations of his Irish allies supplied the only note of ignominy which he had not created for himself.

“On Monday we are to relapse into prose and the Post Office Estimates, which I shall be glad to get through if I can; and on Wednesday I am to get my consolation for all the work and worry of the last ten weeks in welcoming my little sons home, if all is well. . . . I am moderately well, I am thankful to say, though wearily tired.”

The Colonial Conference on postal matters held its first meeting early in April, and considered, amongst other things, the question of the Australian mails, and Mr. Henniker Heaton's Imperial Penny Postage scheme, a *rechauffé* of certain suggestions laid before the Post Office about forty years before. His proposal was not received with much favour by the delegates, and though the gradual improvement of economic conditions has brought it at length within the range of practical politics, some of the difficulties in the way at that time were clearly set out in a letter of Mr. Blackwood's, dated March 17, 1887. The Secretary pointed out that, apart from the question of costs and subsidies, and merely taking into consideration our treaty obligations, the introduction of a penny post from England to the colonies would have curious results, especially if the colonies, as they then did, declined to countenance a penny post to England.

“To create,” he wrote, “a system under which the cost of a letter in the United Kingdom would be 1*d.*; the cost between Dover and Calais, a distance of twenty-one miles, 2½*d.*; the cost between England and Australia, ten or twelve thousand miles, 1*d.*; the cost between England and Canada,* 2½*d.*; and

* Canada, like ourselves, and unlike the majority of the other colonies, belonged to the Postal Union.

the cost from Australia to England from 4*d.* to 9*d.*;—would be to establish a number of anomalies more provoking than those which you are anxious to remove.”

I may remark, in order to avoid misconception, that Mr. Raikes and his advisers, while they did not dispute that some such arrangement might become feasible at a later date,* held that under then existing conditions the project was absolutely barred on economic grounds. Its supporters, on the other hand, practically argued that if it were introduced economic conditions would adjust themselves to the altered circumstances.

With June came the celebration of the Jubilee of her Majesty's accession to the throne. Mr. Raikes, as a Minister, had the privilege of a seat in the Abbey, and on June 24 recorded his impressions of the ceremony in a letter to his mother :—

“The scene in the Abbey was, I think, more thrilling and impressive than any I could have imagined. As the dear old Queen stood, so simple and yet so majestic, facing the altar before the chair in which she was crowned half a century back, she shaded her eyes for a moment with her hand, and one felt for that moment what an intense and complex crowd of recollections and associations must have thronged through her mind. But the Majesty of England bore herself very nobly in the face of the great traditions of our earlier kings; and in the passionate tenderness with which she turned after

* The soundness of the views held by the Post Office in 1887 is confirmed by the fact that only after the lapse of eleven years has it become possible (July, 1898) to introduce a limited system of Imperial Penny Postage, in consequence of some of the colonies withdrawing their previous objections. Its extension, like its establishment, will, no doubt, be governed mainly by economic considerations.

the service to embrace all her descendants she stirred a sympathy in all that vast assembly which brought the tears into many eyes."

We may pass lightly over the general work of the Postal Department, as Mr. Raikes himself gave a general summary of the results obtained in a speech delivered later in the year ; but it is worth mentioning that as far back as 1887 the Postmaster-General strongly advocated a reform which has only recently come into operation. This was that re-directed letters should be allowed to pass free of charge ; but the proposal was negatived by the Treasury on the ground of possible expense, although the Post Office expected to effect an actual saving by its introduction.

In August the Postmaster-General introduced an amended Post Office Savings Bank Bill with a view to extending the facilities for thrift afforded by his department. This was duly carried, in spite of strong opposition on the part of the Banking interest.

The Opposition, who had not been slow to discover certain weak points on the Treasury Bench, amused themselves by prolonging the Session far into the autumn, and on August 3 Mr. Raikes wrote despairingly—

"This wretched Session looks like lagging along for another three weeks, so that the summer will be over before I get home, and we really have nothing to show for it. It is rather maddening to be shut out from the councils of the party, and to see them so hopelessly misdirected."

His estimate, however, proved to be under the

mark, and September found him still in London. The autumn campaign in the country set in early, and before the month was over Mr. Raikes had commenced what proved to be a long series of public engagements.

The first meeting he addressed was held at Kirkintilloch, under the presidency of Sir A. Orr-Ewing, M.P. In October he spoke at Machynlleth, and incidentally referred to the progress made in his own department during the year he had been in office—

“In that time it has been my good fortune to quicken the mail to India and China by something like a day, and at the same time to diminish the expense of sending it by no less than £107,000 a year. When I came into office there were three mails a week to the United States; the public has now the opportunity of sending its letters four or even five times a week; and there, again, we have saved £20,000 a year. It has also been my good fortune to re-establish, in the face of much opposition, the Pattern Post for the benefit of traders, because it was believed that the foreign manufacturer was gaining considerable advantage from the cheap rate of postage for patterns sent from abroad; and I have also the good fortune to carry out what has been hanging fire for three or four years, the Parcel Post with the Republic of France. I make no boast about these things, but I wish to show that, although Ministers may not have been successful in carrying such great and sensational measures as some would demand, we have not been idle in our attention to the interests committed to our charge.”

On October 19 Mr. Raikes hurried to Margate, at considerable personal inconvenience, in order to take his old friend's, Colonel King Harman, place at a meeting which the latter was too unwell to attend.

Colonel King Harman's name reminds me of one or two anecdotes which Mr. Raikes used to tell of him with considerable gusto. It so happened that each of them sent a son to Charterhouse at the same time, and on their return from launching their boys on their public school career, they foregathered in the train. Mr. Raikes indulged in some mild chaff at his friend's expense on discovering that his son had taken a higher place in the school than his rival; but the Irishman, not a whit put out, replied, "I've not seen your boy, but I'll back mine to beat him with the gloves or without. And what's more, for his age, my lad is as good a rifle-shot as there is in Ireland."

"I thought it prudent," Mr. Raikes subsequently remarked, when retailing the circumstance to his son, "to say no more, on *your* account." Both the King Harmans, father and son, have, alas! passed over to the great majority.

Another anecdote had reference to one of the gallant colonel's early Irish election experiences. Party feeling ran high on the occasion, and one evening Colonel King Harman was stabbed in the back as he was ascending the steps leading to his hotel. As soon as the news became known, a wave of sympathy spread over the constituency, and the election seemed as good as won. But matters took an unfavourable turn a few days later, when it was announced not only that the wound was not of a serious nature, but that the assailant had been captured, and was to be prosecuted. In fact, the

revulsion of feeling was so great that it was dangerous for any member of the King Harman party to show himself in the streets.

By the time the candidate had recovered sufficiently to give evidence, the polling day was close at hand, and his agent had given up all hope. On the morning of the trial streets and court-house alike were thronged, and muttered curses greeted the prosecutor as he stepped jauntily into the box. His narrative was listened to with breathless interest, and when, at the close of his evidence, he was asked if he could identify the prisoner, every head in the court was craned forward. The witness's answer came out quite pat. "No," he said, "I cannot. You see, I had my back turned when the blow was struck."

All along, as is not uncommon in Ireland, the question of identification had been a difficulty. This declaration practically settled the matter; the case was dismissed, and the gallant colonel's return to his hotel was veritably a triumphant procession. Once more had popular feeling turned: "Sure he wouldn't see a dacent bhoy murdered," was the cry; and on the day of the election Colonel King Harman was head of the poll.

In October Mr. Beresford Hope (Mr. Raikes's colleague in the representation of Cambridge University) died, and his place was taken in November by the amiable and talented Professor Stokes. The latter, however, in spite of his extraordinary gifts, failed to make any figure in the House of Commons,

in which he never succeeded in making himself at home.

Towards the end of the month rumours of Ministerial changes filled the air, and Mr. Raikes once again urged Sir M. Hicks-Beach to enter the arena as an active combatant if his health would allow him to. As matters turned out, the reports were devoid of foundation, and probably owed their origin to the fact that Mr. Smith had not done quite so well as was expected by his friends in the leadership of the House.

Scant leisure fell to Mr. Raikes's lot during the remainder of the year. The officials at the Post Office had learnt to take him at his word, and no step was decided on unless he had had a full opportunity of going into its merits. Few differences of opinion arose now or henceforward between himself and his subordinates, and he might well have contented himself with accepting their conclusions in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, had he not set before himself a very high standard as to the amount of attention to detail required from the responsible head of the office, and adhered to it on principle. In addition to the ordinary routine, which invariably occupied his attention for several hours in each day, he had at this period under consideration, amongst other things (I have taken the time more or less at random), the ever-present question of Sunday delivery; the proposed arrangement for taking over the submarine cable from France; the Metropolitan District Mail-cart Service; the proposed service to Cyprus; the Australasian

mail contract (in regard to which fresh difficulties had arisen); and a difference of opinion over the mail contract for India and China between the Post Office and the P. and O. In addition to these matters, there were symptoms of discontent amongst the telegraphists and the auxiliary postmen. Into all these, and many other questions of less importance, the Postmaster-General went minutely and laboriously. Indeed, so great was his press of official work that by degrees he began to regard the performance of a long railway journey, and the delivery of a political speech at its end, as a species of relaxation.

It can hardly be a matter for surprise that his health should have suffered, but he could not be persuaded to spare himself in any degree, in spite of the remonstrances of his medical man. In a letter to his mother, on November 27, he said—

“I am getting as much rest as circumstances allow, as Dr. Latham advised me to take a complete holiday for a month or six weeks, which is, of course, impossible for a poor P.M.G.

“But I am going northward to make two speeches, at Ulverston and Whitehaven, on December 5, 6, and must run up to town for three nights before Christmas.”

Still, wherever he went the relentless “pouches,” laden with official papers, were bound to follow him.

He wound up his public engagements for the year by addressing a meeting in support of Mr. Yerburgh at Chester, where he met with a most enthusiastic reception at the hands of his old constituents.

CHAPTER XXV.

MR. RAIKES devoted the Christmas recess of 1887-88 to formulating certain proposals for shortening the sittings of Parliament, and dealing with other points of procedure. He duly submitted his conclusions to the Speaker, and, after receiving a warm letter of thanks from this authority, placed himself in communication with Mr. Smith.

About a month later Mr. Smith forwarded a copy of the new rules, and on February 17 wrote again to say that it was proposed to form a joint committee of the two Houses to examine the question of Private Bill business, and if possible to prepare a scheme which might be accepted both by the Lords and by the Commons. He further requested Mr. Raikes to confer with Mr. Palgrave, who had been asked to draw up the form of motion and reference.

Although the Postmaster-General sought and found relaxation in the discussion of his pet subject, Procedure, he was in 1888, as in the previous year, mainly occupied with the affairs of his own department.

He addressed the Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce in January, and dealt exhaustively with postal matters. He was able to make various additions to his Machynlleth speech of a nature gratifying

to the taxpayer, and after recapitulating the saving of £107,000 a year, which had been effected in the India and China Mail Service, the reduction in the pattern post, which was estimated to have created a new traffic of nearly two millions, the increased profit on the parcel post caused by the introduction of coaches, and the saving of £3000 per annum in the Controller's department, he foreshadowed the change about to come into operation in the transmission of the Australian mails. He hoped by this arrangement to lower the cost by from £4000 to £6000 a year, and at the same time to lessen the rate of postage. Further than this, he had the pleasure of informing a deputation that the price of postcards was likely to be reduced. In making this last announcement, he probably had in view the possibility that Messrs. De La Rue's contract, under which postcards were supplied, would be considerably amended before the year was out.

In the matter of this particular contract, certain information had been supplied to the Postmaster-General by a gentleman whose authority was indisputable; and on examination of the arrangements entered into between Messrs. De La Rue and the Inland Revenue in 1880, Mr. Raikes came to the conclusion that if the matter were properly handled a very large annual saving would be effected.

The question was a rather thorny one to deal with. The Inland Revenue were naturally as unwilling to concede that they had made an extremely bad bargain as Messrs. De La Rue were to admit that they were

making an enormous profit out of their contract. Neither party desired an investigation, and Mr. Raikes was left to fight his own hand. But so confident was he in the accuracy of his information, and so determined to force the matter to an issue, that on February 23 we find him approaching the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the following terms:—

“House of Commons,

“February 23, 1888.

“MY DEAR CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,

“Some days ago I mentioned to you my intention to write to you on the subject of the existing arrangements for the production of Postage and Revenue Stamps and of other Stamped Postal Stationery.

“These arrangements have been since the year 1880 transferred from the control of the Post Office (as far as postal materials are concerned), to the Inland Revenue, the Post Office being in return saddled with the charge of the sums paid to Postmasters for Inland Revenue work.

“Before 1880, as far as I can ascertain, both these departments made their own arrangements for the production of their own stamps. As far as I can learn, the manufacture of the purely Revenue Stamps costs only a few hundreds of pounds annually, while that of the Postal and Revenue Stamps and stamped matter costs about £140,000.

“Of this amount only about £5000 or £6000 is estimated to be the share of the Inland Revenue Department proper.

“It seems to me that the department which uses about 95 per cent. of the stamps should be charged with the arrangements for producing them; and at the same time the sums paid to Postmasters for services to the Inland Revenue should be re-transferred to the votes for that department, though it would still be convenient that they should be paid through the Postmaster-General.

“I have reason to believe that the present contract made by the Inland Revenue in 1880 with Messrs. De La Rue, is very largely in excess of the amount which would adequately remunerate a contractor, and I am inclined to believe that if this work is again entrusted to my department I can effect a very considerable saving of public money.

“May I, then, ask you to communicate to the Board of Inland Revenue the gist of this letter? And if you will ask them to favour you with their views thereon, you will, I dare say, put me in possession of any report which they may make to you on the subject.

“They must be in a position to put before you the details of this expenditure under the contracts made by them, and you will, I am sure, be interested in ascertaining how such expenditure can be economized.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

In consequence of this letter, when the Select Committee on Revenue Departments Estimates was appointed, it was empowered to go thoroughly into the question. In the result, their report entirely bore out Mr. Raikes's contention as to the excessive margin of profit for the contractors. .

This report was a triumph all along the line for the Postmaster-General. Messrs. De La Rue attempted to carry matters off with a high hand, and the Inland Revenue, in the person of Sir Algernon West, showed no inclination to let judgment go by default. Nevertheless, facts proved too strong for them, and the Committee had no hesitation in adopting Mr. Raikes's view that the administration should be transferred from the Inland Revenue to the

Post Office, as beneficial to the public service. This was, of course, a sore blow to the Inland Revenue authorities, who were, however, driven to admit that there was no "official" objection. The implied censure was all the harder to bear as, had matters been allowed to remain *in statu quo* for another three years, their department would have been able to claim the credit for the large reductions which must inevitably have resulted when the time for rearranging the contracts eventually arrived. Thanks to the vigour with which the Postmaster-General had acted upon the information supplied to him, the honour justly fell to the share of his own office.

It is unnecessary to refer in detail to the figures submitted to the Committee, but it is nevertheless worth noting how tightly the Post Office was bound under the Inland Revenue contract in the matter of postcards, on which Mr. Purcell estimated that Messrs. De La Rue made a profit of 55 per cent.

So far as these articles were concerned, the Post Office had to content itself with a bare profit on the material supplied to the public. This amounted, apparently, to £21,000 per annum, and was not, it seems, sufficient to cover the cost of portage. The public continually demanded that the price of postcards should be reduced, at any rate, to that charged by stationers, in ignorance of the fact (not that that, perhaps, made much difference) that under the existing contract a reduction of only one halfpenny a dozen, which would not have brought it to the desired

level, would have swept away all and more than all the profit made by the department on material. The result of so small a change even as this would have been that the Post Office would have made a loss both on material and on portorage. In other words, they would have paid more to Messrs. De La Rue than they received from the public, and would, in addition, have been saddled with the expense of portorage.

On the other articles included in the contract it was demonstrated that there was also a very large margin of profit for the contractors.

The case for the Post Office was so effectually established that Messrs. De La Rue offered to cancel the contract then running, and to enter into a new one at the end of the year, on which a saving of £26,000 would be effected. This enabled Mr. Raikes, later on, to announce a substantial reduction in the price of postcards as from July 1, 1889. The scale determined on was, ten thick cards for 6*d.* instead of twelve for 8*d.*, and ten thin cards for 5½*d.* instead of twelve for 7*d.* Needless to say, this concession failed to satisfy those who were unacquainted with the inner history of the case—that is to say, the public at large; indeed, Mr. Raikes's efforts on this occasion met with but scanty recognition, in spite of the importance of the reform he had been instrumental in obtaining. So far as he himself was concerned, he gave the whole of the credit for what must be regarded as a great achievement to Mr. Purcell, who was subsequently knighted; but

that very able gentleman would, I am sure, be the first to admit that unless Mr. Raikes had thrown his whole heart into the work the inquiry might never have been held, or carried through successfully.

Apart from the proceedings before the Select Committee, Mr. Raikes's Parliamentary labours were of an uneventful nature during the Session of 1888. He took no very prominent part in the consideration of Mr. Ritchie's Local Government Bill, except in so far as it affected Cambridge University, and his attention was chiefly confined to the congenial subject of Private Bill legislation which had been referred to a committee, of which he had been appointed a member, as proposed by Mr. Smith.

No difficulty arose in the Post Office Estimates Debate, in which Mr. Raikes had a comparatively easy task. The proceedings, it is true, were enlivened by assertions on the part of Nationalist members that their letters were tampered with in the post, but they readily accepted the Postmaster-General's assurance that nothing of the sort was done by his authority or with his concurrence.

Curiously enough, although during his tenure of the Chair Mr. Raikes was often brought into sharp contact with the Irishmen, his relations with them were, on the whole, of an amicable nature; and on this occasion their speeches were couched rather in terms of friendly remonstrance than of indignant protest.

A pleasant feature of the year 1888 was the offer

to Mr. Raikes of an honorary degree at the hands of his old University.

An unusually distinguished company assembled at the Senate House on June 9. Included in the ranks of those whom Cambridge University had decided to honour were the late Prince Albert Victor, the Marquess of Salisbury, Lord Roseberry, Lord Selborne, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Goschen, and other men of light and leading.

The Public Orator, who had an arduous task on this occasion, presented Mr. Raikes to his Grace the Chancellor in the following words:—

“*Academiae nostrae consuetudini antiquae consentaneum est illos e regni totius senatoribus quos senatus noster suis delegit suffragiis, tempore idoneo doctoris titulo honoris causa ornare. Inter tot viros primarios conspicitur hodie senator ille noster qui in senatus Britannici institutis usu et experientia jampridem probatus est, quique senatores ipsos, quibus in rogationibus examinandis et corrigendis praerant, totiens monebat, ut ordinis illius amplissimi dignitatem conservarent. Ergo vir in legibus nostris rite constituendis tanta cum gravitate tam diu versatus juris doctor merito nominatur, nisi forte, ut est et litteris excultus, et Musis (nisi fallor) deditus, et litteris nostris prope omnibus huc illuc etiam e Collegio in Collegium transmittendis praepositus, litterarum doctor mavult vocari. Sed nomen utrumque libentius accipit, jure optimo doctor creatur.*”

“*Duco ad vos Henricum Cecilium Raikes.*”

The speaker, it will be noticed, rested Mr. Raikes's claim to the title of Doctor of Laws upon his subject's wide acquaintance with Parliamentary procedure and practice. In dealing with the second half of the title,

he had little difficulty in contriving a play upon the word "letters," with which the name of the Postmaster-General, in virtue of his office, must ever be closely associated. His allusion to Mr. Raikes's poetical leanings was more strictly to the point, but came as a genuine surprise to most of the latter's friends, few of whom were aware that he had ever penned a line of verse.

The Postmaster-General addressed a number of political meetings in the course of the year, but none of them were of first-rate importance.

On September 15 he spoke at a meeting at Hawkstone, and handled the so-called patriot Irish leaders in no very gentle fashion. A few days later he received a threatening letter of rather a serious character, but I imagine that he did not attach much importance to it, as he shortly afterwards left for Ireland on a visit to Barons Court, Humewood, and other places.

In October, in company with Mr. Ashmead Bartlett (as he then was), and Lord Carmarthen, he spoke at Machynlleth, and in November visited Bristol, where he took the opportunity of publicly expressing his admiration for Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. An address of welcome was presented to the Postmaster-General by the members of the Salisbury Club, of which Sir Michael was President, and in the course of his reply Mr. Raikes said—

"They had, perhaps, in their president the finest example of an English statesman of the highest school who was to

be found at present in the ranks of politics. It was an additional pleasure to him to be one of his colleagues, because he thought, not merely by the admirable work which he had done, not merely by the unquestionable capacity he possessed, but by the lofty example and dignity of character he showed, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had done more than any man alive to raise English statesmanship to a high tone."

These were no empty words, for the Postmaster-General was by nature neither a hero-worshipper nor prone to flattery.

Taken as a whole, the year 1888 was one upon which Mr. Raikes could look back with satisfaction. Unmarked, as it had been, by any very striking incident as far as he personally was concerned, there had been a pleasing absence of alarms and excursions such as had distinguished the one preceding it. A cordial understanding had been established between the Postmaster-General and his immediate subordinates, and no serious departmental question of any sort had arisen. Added to this, a number of useful reforms had been carried out or put on foot. In addition to those to which allusion has already been made, attention may be called to the new Savings Bank regulations which came into operation in September, and to the negotiations entered into with the German, French, Dutch, and Belgian Governments in respect of taking over the business of the Submarine Telegraph Company, whose concessions expired in January, 1889.

The task of reconciling the various interests involved was one of much delicacy and difficulty, but at length a solution was arrived at which provided for

the direct transmission of telegrams between England and the other countries concerned, and admitted of a reduction in the charges to three of the latter, viz. France, Germany, and Holland. The credit for this achievement was mainly due to the exertions of Mr. C. H. B. Patey, C.B., Third Secretary of the Post Office, an officer for whom Mr. Raikes had the greatest respect, combined with strong personal liking.

The change came into operation at the close of the financial year, viz. on March 31, 1889, but Mr. Patey did not live to see the actual fulfilment of his work, for he died a few days after "bringing to a successful issue the difficult negotiations connected with the purchase of the submarine cables." These words, together with the brief but eloquent testimony to the worth of the deceased official, "The Civil Service has lost in him one of its most able and zealous officers," were, I am informed by one of Mr. Raikes's private secretaries, added with the Postmaster-General's own hand to the official Post Office Report for 1888.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EARLY in 1889 Mr. Raikes was enabled to snatch a few days of comparative rest on the Riviera. He was accompanied by his second son, and in the latter's cheerful society and under the influence of a change of scene, his health and spirits alike improved.

On February 3 he wrote to his mother from Hyères—

“T. and I left London on Thursday, got to Paris to dine and sleep, strolled about the next day, and went to lunch with Lord and Lady Lytton at the Embassy, who were very kind and charming. He then and there publicly declared that he wrote those lines in *Lucilla*, ‘Obedience is greater than freedom,’ etc, which the Misses W—— cannot find.

“Thence we travelled on Friday evening by the Rapide, and really slept fairly considering we were seven in the carriage, and it was awfully hot, until the sun rose brilliantly a little before Avignon, and we found ourselves at once in the Southern land. T. is enchanted, and I am still young enough to enjoy it immensely. ‘The ampler æther, the diviner air,’ seems to clear and raise one’s spirits as in the olden days.”

Nice, Cannes, and Monaco in turn were visited, and the travellers revelled in the glorious sunshine; but at Milan they were plunged once more into the

depths of winter. Writing thence, on February 15, to his second daughter, Amy, Mr. Raikes said—

“Yesterday T. and I trudged ankle-deep through snow to see the glorious Certosa at Pavia, far the richest and most sumptuous shrine of Christendom. Inside, indeed, it was a vision of brilliant altars blazing with coloured marbles and jewels, marvellously inlaid; inlaid woods even more wonderful in the choir; chapel on chapel crusted with exquisite sculpture and adorned with priceless pictures; columns of every marble; candelabra of wonderful bronze; even the porticoes decorated with terra-cotta designs only less beautiful than the bas-reliefs inside; but in the cloisters the snow lay deep, and over all the flat fields and fens outside brooded the grey fog we know so well at home.”

At Monaco Mr. Raikes beguiled his leisure by writing the following poem, which was subsequently published in the *National Review*, together with his Latin version, which latter is to be found in a volume of selected verse * brought out a few years ago:—

“ἩΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΟΝΟΙΚΟΣ.

“The well-known peninsular promontory on the Riviera, which, with its adjacent dependency of Monte Carlo, constitutes the tiny principality of Monaco, is said to derive its name from a temple of Hercules Monceus (the Solitary Dweller), built many centuries before the Christian Era by the early Greek colonists of the Ligurian coast.

I.

“God of the lonely house, whose temple hoar
 Frowned o'er the waves from this sea-circled height,
 How wise were they who, on this rock-bound shore,
 Reared here their altar to Resistless Might;
 For sure no God-like Presence saving thine
 Had seemed meet Guardian for so stern a Shrine!

* “Poems and Occasional Pieces,” by Henry Cecil Raikes. (Bentley.)

II.

“Gone are the days when on the blue expanse
 Where sky meets sea in sweet confusion blent,
 Th’ adventurous Greek would stay his prow’s advance
 To seek thy favour ere he westward went ;
 Grim Minister of Fate’s behests wert thou,
 Yet scarce so grim as those who reign here now.

III.

“For where the Gods have been the Harpies crowd ;
 Rings on the altar from stretched hands the gold ;
 Peal through the Halls the strains of music loud,
 While human victims perish as of old ;
 But foul the hands that give and that receive,
 And gain the only God they all believe.

IV.

“Oh, that thy club and lion’s-skin again
 Were seen descending from the mountain’s side !
 So should this idle throng who play with pain,
 Fly from the face of Labour deified,
 And the fell Hydra that usurps thy seat
 Lie crushed once more ’neath thy victorious feet.”

When, a few lines back, I spoke of the Postmaster-General beguiling his leisure, I used the expression in a comparative sense. Wherever he went, his work followed him ; indeed, as Sir A. Blackwood remarked at the departmental dinner in 1890—

“The Postmaster-General can never have a day’s leave ; others may have their month or fortnight, but the Postmaster-General never rests. He is the official Flying Dutchman of modern times, for the wheel of the Post Office never stops. Once or twice, indeed, overburdened, he has endeavoured to flee, not leaving his address behind ; but the Post Office, which is never at fault, tracked him to his hiding-place wherever he was, on the shores of the Riviera or in the fastnesses of

Wales, and delivered to him with unfailing regularity his daily official papers."

An interesting feature of this year, and one which engrossed a large share of Mr. Raikes's attention, was her Majesty's visit to Wales in August.

The formal announcement was made towards the end of April, and on May 6 Mr. Raikes received a letter from Sir Theodore Martin, which concluded in these words :—

"I am delighted to see with what enthusiasm the announcement has been taken. Meanwhile, if you can keep the busy-bodies from fussing, and perhaps frightening the Queen by asking too much, I am sure that you will do so."

This was no easy task, but the Postmaster-General coped with it successfully, and from this time on he was consulted at every point of the arrangements. In the end, his knowledge of the people and of the locality, and his business-like grasp of detail, proved of so much value, that he was paid the high compliment of being offered the post of Minister in attendance on the Queen during her visit. So far as I am aware, this honour had not been bestowed previously upon any minister who was not a member of the Cabinet.

As the summer advanced, excitement rose to a high pitch in North Wales; and, with hardly an exception, the inhabitants, whatever their religious or political views, united in preparing a fitting welcome for their Sovereign.

That her Majesty appreciated both the country and her reception by its inhabitants may be gathered

from the fact that, when bidding farewell to Mr. Raikes at the conclusion of her stay, she was pleased to say that the scenery surrounding Palé* was brighter than that in Scotland at Balmoral, and that she had greatly enjoyed her visit.

In the course of the Session of 1889 the Postmaster-General made several important contributions to debate. The most noteworthy of these were his speech at the close of the Second Reading of the Tithe Bill (eventually withdrawn), in which he wound up the debate from the Government point of view; his carefully studied oration on University representation; his speech in the Criminal Code debate; and his brilliant defence of the Church in Wales on Mr. Dillwyn's motion in favour of Disestablishment, which was described in print at the time as "the finest speech delivered during the discussion." Its closing sentence might, perhaps, be remembered with advantage even in the present day. It ran—

"The religious future of this country depends not on the antagonism between the two bodies" (Churchmen and Non-conformists), "and the fostering of unfriendly rivalry between them, but rather upon the recognition of the fact that a man may be a very good Nonconformist and yet no enemy to the Church, and that a good Churchman may do honour to the character and spirit of Nonconformity, the one recognizing the services that the other has done in the past, and that other realizing the services that the former may do in the future."

Mr. Raikes's intervention in the Criminal Code

* The seat of Mr. Henry Robertson, which had been selected as the Queen's headquarters.

debate was prompted mainly by his desire to enter a protest against the system of dealing with offences committed by servants of the Post-Office in their official capacity in a spirit of uniform severity, which was followed by some of the judges. He took as his text a particular instance, in which, unless my memory misleads me, the late Lord Coleridge was concerned, and said *inter alia*—

“I am rather inclined to question the propriety of a judge fortifying his own decision in a particular case by referring to the supposed view of the Postmaster-General; and I think I was, in the circumstances, justified in addressing a letter to the learned judge to assure him that he was misinformed as to the views of the Post Office, and that, so far from believing that a uniform sentence of five years was a protection to the public and the Post Office, I believed, on the other hand, that, by the disinclination which it produced upon the minds of jurors to convict, such a sentence was most detrimental to the interests of the public, and subjected *employés* of the Post Office to the most serious temptation. Since that time I am glad to say that the judges have exercised a much more general discretion in the sentences they have passed.”

This question of sentences may seem a small matter to the general public; but I think it is worth putting on record that Mr. Raikes, against whom it was at times urged that when he erred it was on the side of severity, was instrumental, quietly and unostentatiously, as was his wont, in breaking up a cruel system of punishment.

The Postmaster-General's appearances on public platforms were not very numerous during 1889, and were made chiefly in connection with Church matters.

The first meeting attended by him, on January 8, was of no great importance, but nevertheless presents some curious features. The spread of the principles inculcated by the Primrose League had been very rapid in Flintshire during the year 1888, largely in consequence of the efforts of Mr. Raikes's eldest daughter, and habitations had been formed in different parts of the county, amongst others at Hawarden. The members at this latter place organized a concert by way of an opening celebration, and invited the Postmaster-General to attend and deliver an address. This he promised to do, and the preparations were far advanced when an unexpected difficulty arose. The only available place in the village for the entertainment was the school, and in due course application was made to the vicar, the Rev. Stephen Gladstone, for the use of it. This was met with a pointblank refusal, for which the vicar took the responsibility on the ground that "to open the schools for a political concert would not only be an innovation, but a departure from the spirit of the purposes for which the schools were built and are maintained." No doubt Mr. Stephen Gladstone was acting strictly within his rights; but it must be borne in mind that, as a general rule, the school was available for entertainments, and that throughout the county either political party could obtain the various village schools for their own purposes on payment of a small fee. Had there been any other suitable building at hand the refusal would have counted for little, but its sting lay in the

fact that there was not, and that, as it seemed, the concert would have to be abandoned. Remonstrances proved unavailing, but the Primrose Leaguers, determined not to be crushed at the outset, put their hands into their pockets, and, at an expense of about £30, cleaned and repaired a dilapidated old iron-foundry. There, eventually, the concert was held. The room was filled to overflowing, and an allusion by Mr. Raikes to the difficulties they had encountered in carrying out their programme, was greeted in a way which plainly indicated the view of the question entertained by a large section of the inhabitants of Hawarden.

A harsh construction was naturally placed on Mr. Stephen Gladstone's action, but personally I do not for one moment wish to suggest that he was guided by any other than the highest motives. Nevertheless, the incident is instructive, in view of the outcry raised in the Radical Press whenever the use of a school is refused to members of their own party, be the motives of the managers what they may.

The first meeting addressed by Mr. Raikes in the autumn was the St. Asaph Diocesan Conference held at Rhyl, where he extended a warm welcome to the newly appointed Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Edwards. He said—

“Just at this moment, when the Church in Wales has been going through one of the most critical seasons of her long experience, it was a great thing that the diocese should suddenly find itself reinforced by the spirit and strength which spoke to them like a trumpet-call in the inaugural address of

their president. Most cordially did he echo the words of Mr. Stanley Leighton, that with such a leader the Churchmen of that diocese had little to fear."

That this forecast was not a mistaken one subsequent events have amply proved. At the present moment the position of the Church in Wales is stronger than it has been for many years. Many have laboured freely in the cause, but the Bishop of St. Asaph stands head and shoulders above all others. I must not here dilate upon the qualities which have made him a tower of strength, and I will merely say that, apart from his administrative abilities, which alone are sufficient to have brought him into prominence, he possesses the rare gift of being able to rouse in the hearts of others that spirit of pure enthusiasm, free from the slightest taint of self-seeking, which animates his own breast.

Amongst other engagements, Mr. Raikes visited Cardiff at the end of September, and addressed the Church Congress on the subject of "The Establishment in relation to (a) Religious Equality, (b) Spiritual Independence." He also delivered a speech to the members of the local Conservative Club. On October 15 he was the principal speaker at a crowded and enthusiastic Church Defence meeting at Birmingham; and his address, which was highly appreciated, was subsequently reproduced in pamphlet form.

The Postmaster-General probably found relief at this time in concentrating his attention, even though it were but for a few hours, upon a subject which

always had the effect of taking him out of himself. When he made his appearance upon the platform at Birmingham, to all appearances entirely engrossed in the matter in hand, his auditors would have been surprised to learn that for some days he had been the victim of an inward struggle, which had culminated in the resolve to sever himself from the Government. The actual determining cause was the inclusion of Mr. Chaplin in the Cabinet on his appointment as Minister of Agriculture. This, Mr. Raikes, not without reason, looked upon as a breach of faith as far as he himself was concerned; and he hesitated only to send in his resignation because it was supposed that Mr. Matthews was not unlikely to accept the Irish Lordship of Appeal rendered vacant by the death of Lord Fitzgerald. In this event he would be within measurable distance of obtaining the chief object of his ambition, the position of Home Secretary; and until this matter was decided he felt that any overt act on his part would be premature. He, nevertheless, gave a clear intimation of his intentions to several of those in the Premier's confidence, and as affairs turned out he would undoubtedly have tendered his resignation had it not been for the strong personal influence exercised over him by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. The latter wrote, on October 19—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“Your letter has been forwarded to me here” (Hereford), “and I have written to Salisbury in support of your claims for some recognition of your work; but not for

the recognition you wish for, because I think you are wrong in supposing that Matthews *could* be appointed to Lord Fitzgerald's vacancy. My own impression is that an Irish judge or barrister must succeed him ; and if so, of course, there would be no opening of the kind you anticipate. Failing such opening, or some general reconstruction (of which I see no prospect at present, much as I should like it), I really do not see what it would be possible for Salisbury to do for you just now. I can quite understand your feeling about being passed over ; but in Chaplin's case I do not see how Salisbury could have helped it. Every one expected that he (Chaplin) would be President of the Board of Agriculture ; and it would have undone any good that may have been done by the Act among agriculturists to have left the first President out of the Cabinet. You have been passed over, so to say, by the office, rather than its particular occupant ; and therefore I hope, even if nothing can be done, you will not find it necessary, when our fortunes are rather low, to take the course you suggest.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours very truly,

“ M. E. HICKS-BEACH.”

The “ recognition ” alluded to was not long delayed, for the newly constituted Chairmanship of Customs was informally offered to Mr. Raikes shortly afterwards. For this post he had not the least desire, but the suggestion turned his thoughts into a new channel. It had become tolerably obvious that those who had for some time past asserted that the Home Secretary was anxious to be relieved of his office were labouring under a delusion ; and as far as that quarter was concerned, Mr. Raikes was unwillingly driven to the conclusion that the gate was firmly closed to his

ambition. Under the circumstances he thought it might be worth while to raise once more the question of the Speakership. His position as a Minister of the Crown would have rendered him ineligible for the post in the event of a vacancy, but he proposed to get over the difficulty by the following ingenious expedient, viz. that Mr. Courtney should be offered the Chairmanship of Customs, and if he accepted it, that Mr. Raikes himself should be transferred to his old post of Chairman of Committee thereby vacated, with the understanding that when the Speakership fell vacant he should be the Government candidate for the position.

The proposed arrangement did not, however, advance beyond the theoretical stage, and, so far as Mr. Raikes was concerned, negotiations were brought to an abrupt close in November by the arrival of the news of the somewhat sudden death, at Hyères, of his mother, to whom he was devotedly attached. At once his personal aims and ambitions sank into nothingness, and, almost heart-broken, he hurried away to the South of France. The relation between mother and son had been one of unbroken tenderness from the earliest days. Of necessity they were much apart, but rarely a week passed without an interchange of letters between the two. Their mutual understanding and sympathy were perfect, and to the end each gave to the other that full and inner confidence, the outcome of the closest of all earthly ties. In view of the influence upon the character and career of Mr. Raikes exercised by his

mother, it will not, I hope, be out of place to introduce here a brief sketch of her life, which appeared in the *Manchester Courier* of December 4, 1889. It runs—

“By the death of Mrs. Raikes, of St. Martin’s, Chester, the venerable mother of the Postmaster-General, which took place some days since at the Villa Farnèsé, Hyères, we lose yet another, and, perhaps, one of the last links which connect our time with the literary epoch of the pre-Victorian era. The youngest and favourite daughter of Archdeacon Wrangham (himself the most graceful scholar of his University, and the intimate friend and associate of all the principal celebrities of the literary world which then existed in this country), the deceased lady enjoyed almost unique advantages in sharing the society and imbibing the spirit of the great poets and critics of that day. As a ‘wee lassie’ she had sat on Sir Walter Scott’s knee, at Abbotsford, to listen to the romantic lore of the Border. She had revelled in the affectionate chaff with which Sydney Smith loved to rally her father on those wonderful conversational powers, which were at once the delight and envy of his Whig compeers. As a young girl she was free of Miss Mitford’s study, and had heard from her lips most of those charming anecdotes of *Our Village* long before they appeared in print. She had breakfasted with Rogers, she had corresponded with Felicia Hemans, she had read Heber’s poems in the proof-sheets, and probably profited by his kindly advice and correction of her own girlish essays and verse; and it is not to be wondered at that a literary taste so happily inherited and so richly cultivated should have made her for more than sixty years the ornament and the delight of the circle to which she belonged.”

At the time of his journey South, Mr. Raikes was suffering from intermittent pains in the head, and weakness of sight, and he therefore lingered beside the “tideless wave” for about a fortnight, in the hope

of recuperating his health and spirits. In this he was to some extent successful, and in a letter, written on his birthday, November 25, from Beaulieu, to his son Henry, he said—

“I am feeling much better for the change, and hope to progress, in spite of the fogs of London and mists of Wales, which seem all the more terrible from the standpoint of this serene salubrious sunlight. I have hit on the idea that I have been suffering from suppressed gout in the head, which seems to explain much of my physical discomforts, so I think I shall see Morgan before calling in Critchett.”

It is almost pitiful, in the light of later events, to note how determined the writer was not to admit even to himself the possibility that his physical condition might, in reality, be the result of circumstances over which he had a measure of control.

Another loss, by death, which Mr. Raikes felt very keenly was that of Dr. Kennedy, which had occurred earlier in the year. From his school-days his old head-master had been his firm friend, and, when occasion arose, his vigorous supporter. Stern in demeanour and outspoken in his wrath as he was, there was, nevertheless, something very lovable about the “Doctor.” Beneath his grim exterior lay a very tender heart. Of his constancy in friendship I have already spoken; of his culture and breadth of scholarship, which have gained him world-wide renown, there is no need to speak. Amongst the letters treasured by Mr. Raikes was one written at this time by Miss Kennedy. In it she said—

“ Amongst the numbers of letters which come to us, there is a peculiar comfort in those of our dear father’s old pupils.

“ I think he knew, as he could not help doing, how much he was loved by them ; but he thought too little of himself to realize how deep and far-reaching had been his influence for good.

“ We do, indeed, know how you loved him, and I am sure you know how heartily he returned your feeling.”

Much against his will, the Postmaster-General was once again drawn into collision with Sir Arthur Blackwood, in December of this year. The Secretary to the Post Office was, as is well known, deeply interested in philanthropic work ; and he had, it seems, promised to preside at an anti-Roman Catholic meeting, to be held at Exeter Hall, in connection with certain legal proceedings, in which Dr. Barnardo had become involved.

Mr. Arthur O’Connor, M.P., drew Mr. Raikes’s attention to the matter, and in a very temperate letter pointed out that, having regard to the course which the High Court of Justice had taken in the particular case ; to the circumstance that the affair had excited a great deal of very warm feeling in the country ; to the fact that a large number of Roman Catholics were employed in the Department, who legitimately looked for due advancement and fair treatment under Sir A. Blackwood, and could not regard with indifference a public manifestation of anti-Catholic feeling on his part ; and to the directions which had so often been enforced in respect of the public action of Civil Servants,—it was most undesirable that the Secretary

to the Post Office should take part in the contemplated demonstration.

Mr. Raikes could not question the cogency of the arguments put forward, but he was, nevertheless, very loth to interfere. After full consideration, he determined that in the best interests of the Service it was his duty to do so. Accordingly, he wrote the following carefully worded letter to the Secretary:—

“I think I ought to let you see the enclosed letter from Mr. Arthur O'Connor, M.P., which is couched, you will admit, in not unbecoming language. You may easily suppose that I should be most reluctant at any time to interfere with the free exercise of your discretion in a public matter. But I must confess that it does appear to me undesirable that those who hold the highest places in the Civil Service should, by participation in public controversies of a burning description, lay themselves open in any way to imputations of religious or political partisanship. And I feel sure that the last thing you would wish would be to cause any embarrassment to me or to the Department in meeting such an attack as is suggested, in the House of Commons or the Press.

“It will, therefore, be a great relief to my mind if I hear you so far agree with me as to have relinquished your intention to take part in the meeting advertised.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

The letter was a very difficult one to write, and it is evident that Sir A. Blackwood fully appreciated not only the spirit which dictated it, but the form in which it was couched.

It is unnecessary to reproduce the whole of the

Secretary's very long and earnest reply; but, briefly summed up, it was to the effect that the writer identified himself entirely with Dr. Barnardo, of whose institution he was a vice-president. The last few sentences are sufficiently indicative of its general tenor—

“I can only say that with me it is a case of conscience. Men may call me a bigot if they like. I must be true to my convictions, though I deeply lament the necessity and the circumstances which force me to take the stand I do. It is a cause of grief and pain to me to be ‘a man of strife’ when every natural feeling prompts me differently.

“I hope you will believe me when I say that it is with the deepest regret that I feel unable now to withdraw from the post I have been announced by the whole Press to take to-morrow. To do so would be to inflict far more serious damage upon Dr. Barnardo's homes than if I had never consented.

“I sincerely trust that no embarrassment will accrue to you as P.M.-Genl. If it unfortunately does, I must ask you to let me bear all the consequences by making whatever statement or taking whatever step you think right.

“I repeat, it causes me sincere pain to write this after your most kind letter.

“Yours very truly,

“S. A. BLACKWOOD.”

Although Mr. Raikes was disappointed at the rejection of his advice—and, perhaps, rather more than disappointed—he could not help admiring Sir A. Blackwood's determination to do what he considered right at all hazards.

Both Postmaster-General and Secretary were, of course, aware that the suggestion made by the former was, in view of their relative positions, in reality a

delicately veiled command ; and, further, that had Mr. Raikes chosen to communicate to the Government the fact that a recommendation of his had been ignored in a matter so closely connected with the internal discipline of his department, the results, so far as his subordinate was concerned, might have been serious indeed. The Postmaster-General, however, took no further action in the matter, and when, in the following Session, Mr. Arthur O'Connor moved to reduce his salary as a protest against Sir A. Blackwood's action, he made no allusion to the correspondence which had taken place, and, far from sheltering himself behind it, boldly met the attack by explaining that the Secretary had occupied the Chair on the occasion referred to simply with a desire to support an old friend, and that he neither attacked the judges nor used any expressions offensive to Roman Catholics. He added that he was, therefore, not prepared to censure Sir A. Blackwood for exercising his civil rights in attending the meeting. Mr. Raikes's loyalty to his colleague was characteristic of his disposition, which always prompted him to make the cause of any official in his department who was attacked from outside, his own, when he could justly do so. On this occasion, as he had made up his mind to treat the Secretary's refusal to bow to his wishes merely as a misunderstanding, and to refrain from any allusion to it, his task was rendered comparatively easy by the studiously moderate tone of Sir A. Blackwood's speech, which in itself went far to disarm criticism.

Of postal affairs in general little need be said. During the second half of the financial year there was a very large increase in the number of stout post-cards issued, which proved that the reduction in price was appreciated by the public; in London, in the course of the year, the outward and inward mail service was improved; a further reduction in cost of the mail to the East was effected; the Foreign and Colonial parcel post was largely extended; telegraphic money orders were introduced as an experiment; over five hundred new post offices were opened; and the work of the Savings Bank branch considerably increased. Generally speaking, there was a steady advance all along the line. During 1889 faint murmurs indicative of the storm destined to break over the Post Office in the following year were heard from time to time, and some activity was displayed by the then newly formed Postmen's Union. As early as September, Mr. Raikes caused inquiries to be addressed to the various offices, and though the authorities did not apprehend any actual outburst, they were, nevertheless, on the alert. The points which really called for consideration were the position of the unestablished men, and the initial wages of the established men. As regards the former, Mr. Raikes was strongly in favour of raising their wages after four years' service by one shilling a week; and in the case of the latter he recommended that their initial stipend should be increased from 16s. to 18s. a week. Had these concessions been made at the time, in all probability the back of the agitation

would have been broken; but, unfortunately, the Treasury proved obdurate, and matters were perforce allowed to drift.

It is, perhaps, worth recording that in November of this year Mr. Raikes was invited to accept the Readership of the Middle Temple (of which Inn he was a Bencher), and that he readily assented to the proposal.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE Jubilee of Penny Postage was celebrated with due form and ceremony in 1890. The first function, a departmental dinner, was held on January 15, and was largely attended. The Postmaster-General occupied the Chair, and was supported by all the principal officials, Lord Playfair and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, two of his predecessors in office, Sir John Tilley, Mr. Pearson Hill, son of Sir Rowland Hill, and many ex-officials.

On May 16 a *conversazione*, arranged in co-operation by the Lord Mayor and Corporation and the Post Office, was held at the Guildhall, and was honoured by the presence of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Teck, and other distinguished persons. There was an extensive exhibition of postal appliances, which enabled the guests to trace the general development of the system which plays so large a part in our scheme of life. It was possible to compare a working post office of the day with a facsimile of one of its predecessors of a hundred years before; models of travelling post offices, mail steamers, and other interesting features met the eye at every turn; while, in addition to a large collection of pictures, there were on view books, stamps, letters, State papers, and other

curiosities, each and all of which illustrated some particular phase of Post Office history. The speeches, which were few in number, and, as befitted the occasion, couched in a happy vein, were contributed by the Postmaster-General, the Lord Mayor, Sir Henry Isaacs, and the ex-Lord Mayor, Sir James Whitehead. The exhibition was thrown open to the public on May 17 and 19, and proved very popular. An enormous business was done in the sale of Jubilee post-cards, ordinary post-cards (of which over 20,000 were disposed of), and stamps. The main object of the buyers was, of course, to get their letters or cards stamped with the official Guildhall stamp as a memento of the occasion. In all, letters to the number of 190,000 were stamped, sorted, and despatched from the postal sorting-office in the three days. Of these, 40,000 were actually written and posted in the Guildhall itself. The proceedings in connection with the civic festivities were, it is perhaps hardly necessary to state, brought to a conclusion by a banquet, which was held at the Albion Tavern, under the presidency of Sir James Whitehead, Bart.

The actual official celebration of the Penny Post Jubilee was held at the South Kensington Museum on July 2, and was attended by some 4000 persons. It was hoped that her Majesty might be able to be present, but this was found to be impracticable, and Royalty was represented by the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. The Postmaster-General arranged that, as far as possible, the day should be kept as a holiday,

in order to enable provincial officers to participate in the celebration in the metropolis. Many men travelled up from great distances, and in a large number of country districts local functions in harmony with the proceedings in London were held. At 6 p.m. the Duchess of Edinburgh turned a key, by means of which act on her part a message was despatched from the Museum to the provincial offices inviting the men there assembled to join in simultaneous cheers for the Queen. The signal met with a hearty response, save in a few districts where the men, by a curious perversion of reasoning, had determined to reply with groans, in order to draw attention to the fact that certain grievances, then under consideration at headquarters, had not been redressed.

The whole of the profits and subscriptions, amounting in the aggregate to the sum of £22,000, were handed over to the Rowland Hill Memorial and Benefit Fund established in the interests of distressed postal servants. The credit for the satisfactory financial result attained was largely due to the efforts of Sir James Whitehead, Bart., and Mr. Baines, C.B. Of the many speeches delivered in connection with the celebration I propose only to draw attention to two. The first of these is Mr. Raikes's address at the departmental dinner in January, which presents several features of unusual interest, and the second, Sir Arthur Blackwood's graceful contribution on the same occasion, a portion of which has been already quoted in a previous chapter. Mr. Raikes naturally dwelt upon the

transformation effected by the adoption of Rowland Hill's scheme, which he described as "one of the greatest peaceful revolutions of the century."

To it he directly attributed the enormous development of the postal system, on which he enlarged in the following striking passage:—

"Talk of armies! Why, the number of officers I have just mentioned to you, and of whom I may say I am for the time being the Commander-in-Chief, are more numerous than any regular forces which the Secretary of State for War can show within the compass of her Majesty's dominions. The fleets over which the Postmaster-General exercises control are faster, better found, and more efficient than any which obey the bidding of the First Lord of the Admiralty. Talk of the Foreign Office! or the Colonial Office! Why, half of the work of those departments is what we make for them, and in which we have to assist them.

"I believe, in fact, that the growth from this grain of mustard seed, this little penny post which was invented by the Worcestershire schoolmaster, has been such that we are approaching a period, if we have not reached it, when the Post Office will be regarded with eyes of envy and suspicion by every other department in the State."

Such sentiments as these naturally met with a rapturous reception from those assembled. The vast growth of the Post Office was, it is true, to them something of a commonplace, but it presented to them all the features of a novelty when pressed upon their attention not merely in the ordinary form of figures and statistics, but in the picturesque garb in which the Postmaster-General arrayed it by means of the simple and direct method of comparison.

And the great results achieved were due to the initiative of one man! That was the keynote throughout. Subdued at first, enthusiasm spread and grew; as the moments sped the guests unreservedly abandoned themselves to its influence; and when the Postmaster-General resumed his seat, and, at the bidding of Sir Arthur Blackwood, who it had been arranged originally should speak next, Mr. Pearson Hill rose in his place, in an instant of time fifty years were bridged over, and by a common impulse, in their heartfelt welcome to the son, all present joined in paying meet tribute to the father in whose honour they were assembled.

Mr. Raikes returned to Wales after the banquet, and delivered a lecture on Church History at Mold; but the spirit of unrest which was at this time prevailing throughout the Service soon rendered his presence necessary in London. The sorters were earnestly pressing their claims for an improved scale of pay; mutterings of discontent were to be heard from the Savings Bank Department; the telegraphists were giving evidence of their dissatisfaction with the existing state of things; while last, and by no means least, the postmen were actively preparing for a trial of strength.

Trouble arose in the first instance at Cardiff. In itself the matter was comparatively trivial, as only eight men were concerned. An inexcusable blunder on the part of a subordinate official placed the department in a very awkward position; the advocacy of

Sir Edward Reed, M.P. for Cardiff, and the action of a section of the Press brought the affair into prominence; and finally the general feeling of discontent which permeated the Service gave a fictitious importance to the agitation, and tended to obscure the real issue.

The dispute centred on the removal of eight telegraphists from Cardiff to other offices. The men's case was that on January 25 eight of the clerks at the head of the second class list were informed by the district surveyor that they were to be promoted, subject to one condition: "Unless they could prove that not one of them had written the articles * which had been published in the newspapers, his instructions were to confer the appointments upon clerks not at Cardiff, and to compel the eight 'suspects' to take places at the bottom of the second class in the offices of other towns." The men protested their innocence, and then, to quote from a letter dated February 8, 1890, and addressed by Sir Edward Reed to the Postmaster-General—

"They were then—some of them, at least—told that if faultless themselves, they must be aware which of their colleagues were in fault, and were ordered to say who they were. This they were unable to do. They were then allowed a short time (I believe two days) in which they should either declare or find out which of their colleagues had committed the alleged fault. At the expiration of this time they were still unable to give the information. They were then peremptorily ordered to leave the town in a few hours, and to join the staff in other places, and this they have had to do."

* Certain articles and letters published in the *Western Mail*.

As stated, the case appeared one of peculiar hardship. In effect, the men declined to play the part of spies, and for that reason were not only deprived of promotion, but were torn from home and friends. Needless to say, the hearts of their fellows went out to them. Indignation meetings were held, resolutions of sympathy passed, and the Postmaster-General roundly abused.

As a matter of fact, eight men were transferred, but only three of them were drawn from the eight who, under a misconception, were questioned by the surveyor in reference to articles in the Press. These three were not transferred in consequence of anything that passed on that occasion, but were, together with five other clerks, removed to different offices for reasons which are set out in Mr. Raikes's reply to Sir Edward Reed's communication.

“General Post Office, London, February 11, 1890.

“SIR,

“I have to thank you for your letter of the 8th inst. relating to the Cardiff Telegraph Office, and I can see how the misapprehension arose which has somewhat complicated the matter to which you refer. In order to enable you fully to comprehend the case, I must tell you that many months ago I had settled to make considerable changes in the *personnel* of the staff at Cardiff as soon as the opportunity presented itself. The result of my inquiries was to convince me that the discipline at Cardiff was very lax. The secrecy of private telegrams had been violated, an offence which is in direct contravention of an Act of Parliament, and one which most seriously affects the public. Another breach of discipline came under my notice when I visited Cardiff in the autumn,

and the close association of the telegraph office with the Press was such as to shake confidence in the maintenance of that privacy which the public is entitled to demand. I was obliged to consider at one time the expediency of removing more than one officer from the public service altogether, and I only justified the lenient course which I adopted on the ground that too great a laxity of discipline had been permitted to prevail. It was under these circumstances that I decided to move to other offices, without loss of pay, and at the expense of the department, three officers whom I was unable to promote, and five other juniors who had failed to win the confidence of their official superiors.

“It has been brought to my knowledge that, owing to some misinterpretation of my instructions, the eight senior telegraphists on* the first class were charged with communicating with the Press; but this was not my intention, as is evident from the fact that I promoted five of them immediately.

“My intention was to remove from Cardiff the eight officers in whom I had the least confidence, and I hoped that the opportunity it thus afforded them of recovering it in new scenes of work would not be thrown away. None have suffered a diminution of pay, inasmuch as I should not have promoted any of them, even if they had not been transferred.

“I hold, and hold most strongly, that it is my duty, as head of the department, to reserve to myself full liberty to transfer an officer from one office to another when circumstances require it. I regret that such transfers involve domestic inconveniences, but I cannot allow domestic convenience to frustrate changes which are required in the interests of the Service.

“You will, I am sure, be glad to hear that, so anxious has been my desire to mitigate as far as I could any domestic discomfort, I have given to the three senior officers such leave of absence from their new posts as may enable them to effect their transfer with the least possible inconvenience.

* Apparently the sentence should read, “on the list for promotion to the first class.”

“The future of the officers transferred is in their own hands, and, as I said before, nothing will give me greater pleasure than to receive, as occasion offers, such favourable reports of their conduct as may justify their promotion.

“I am, sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

This letter makes it tolerably evident that in place of being hardly dealt with, the eight men who were actually transferred were treated with greater leniency than they had any right to expect, and also that Sir E. Reed had not been informed of the actual facts when he took up the case. The circumstance that eight men were interviewed by the surveyor and questioned (not threatened, as incorrectly stated), and that eight men were transferred, no doubt tended to create confusion in the mind of the public; and it would seem that undue advantage was taken of this mistake by those who thought it to their interest to foster the agitation.

The incident afforded Mr. Raikes an opportunity of making in public a characteristic declaration. In reply to the toast of “Her Majesty’s Ministers” at a city dinner on February 12, he said in the course of his speech—

“What he wished to say that night, and he thought it would be echoed by every man of business, was that if a person was to be in the position of a Minister of the Crown charged with great duties and with the administration of great interests, he must have the confidence of the country to enable him to administer his department as he thought best. Departments were not to be administered by excited meetings

of insubordinate officials ; they were not to be regulated by the enthusiasm of philanthropic and speculative editors ; they were not to be administered, even, if he might say so with great respect, by so large a body as the House of Commons. A Minister—if he was to be a Minister—must be a Minister. He must be allowed to exercise his discretion and judgment as he believed to be best in the service of the State so long as he remained Minister, and when they thought he was not fit to remain, the sooner they got rid of him the better.”

A restless feeling was manifested generally during the early part of 1890. As will be recollected, it infected the police, and to some extent the soldiers, and for a time threatened to play havoc in the ranks of the less highly disciplined postal servants.

The Postmaster-General was confronted with disaffection in three different quarters, viz. among the telegraphists, the sorters, and the unestablished postmen. The first and second of these bodies, though very much in earnest and trembling on the verge of actual revolt, proceeded, in the main, upon recognized lines. The authorities, by the exercise of tact and patience, were enabled to keep them in hand, and eventually succeeded in satisfying them that their legitimate grievances would meet with full consideration. Had the Postmaster-General and his advisers made one false step, or shown any sign of wavering, these two classes would probably have mutinied, and have made common cause with the postmen, with whom they were naturally to a large extent in sympathy. This danger was averted by the tactful policy pursued by the Postmaster-General, who aimed throughout at keeping

the issues raised by the various bodies separate, and at dealing with them separately. It may be said that, as far as he personally was concerned, he was always anxious to improve the condition of his men, and had he been free to deal with the revenues of the Post Office, his reign would in all probability have been marked by larger reforms than those which from time to time, and under pressure, were obtained from the Treasury. When satisfied that a real grievance existed, he was untiring in his efforts to get it redressed ; but, even in the event of failure, he never wavered in his loyalty to his colleagues who held the purse-strings, or allowed his subordinates to suspect where the real difficulty so often lay. But in one thing he was inflexible. Every demand for reform must be placed before him in a legitimate way. He would never consent to his hand being forced, and when irregular pressure was threatened he would decline to stir one step in the desired direction until submission had been made on the part of the offenders and discipline restored.

The telegraphists, by pursuing a legitimate course, enabled him to take prompt action. The provincial petition was received by the Postmaster-General on February 28, and on March 4 he took steps to arrange for a strong Departmental Committee to consider the general condition of the telegraph service. He informed the House of this when Lord Compton brought forward a motion affirming that the position of the telegraphists was unsatisfactory, on April 15. The

petition of the London men had not been received, but he had granted their request that he should receive a deputation.

Although attempts were made to import the vexed question of the right of public meeting into the proceedings, and a good deal of high-sounding talk was indulged in by the more impatient members of the telegraphic body, the majority were convinced that a genuine effort was being made to redress their grievances, and determined to await the decision of the committee. The deliberations of this latter body were, however, so long protracted that in the course of the summer renewed signs of impatience made themselves felt, and during the first week of July the men gave evidence of their dissatisfaction by determining not to work overtime after July 12. They were prudent enough, however, not to carry this resolution into effect; and on July 15 the recommendations of the Departmental Committee were made public. The *Times* of July 17, thus sums them up—

“As a result of the labours of the Committee of Inquiry, an improved scale of pay for sorting and telegraph clerks in the provinces, and for telegraphists employed in London has been recommended to and sanctioned by the Treasury, to take effect from Friday last. The announcement of this measure would probably have been made earlier had not the telegraphists of the London Central Office lately shown signs of insubordination, which culminated in an announcement of refusal to work overtime at the existing rates after the 12th inst. . . . The measure now introduced . . . will cost the country not less than £200,000 per annum. . . . In addition to this, further advantages have been accorded to

the staff throughout the country in the matter of overtime, Sunday work, Bank Holiday work, and sick leave. This measure practically meets very largely all the more important demands of the staff, and, to say the very least, places them in a very favourable position with regard to outside service of a similar character."

Even Earl Compton had to confess in his speech on the Telegraph Vote that, "considering the great difficulties in regard to the financial part of the subject, the right hon. gentleman's scheme was much better than he, for one, had expected it to be." He, nevertheless, moved to reduce the Postmaster-General's salary by £150, as a protest against the regulation forbidding the operatives to hold meetings unless an official reporter were present. In face of Mr. Raikes's reply, the House declined to treat the matter seriously, and the motion, which failed to find a seconder, was withdrawn. The telegraphists were, on the whole, well satisfied, and gave no further cause for anxiety; indeed, in view of Mr. Raikes's readiness from the first to give careful consideration to all legitimate grievances, the agitation might possibly not have advanced so far as it actually did had it not been fostered by the "well-meant endeavours of philanthropic politicians."

The strike amongst the postmen was a much more serious matter. Discontent had shown itself in their ranks in the previous year, and the representations made to Mr. Raikes had convinced him that the men had cause for complaint in several respects. As already mentioned, he called the attention of the

Treasury to the matter, but the sum involved by his recommendations appeared so large that they took time for consideration. Meanwhile, the men regarded the situation with growing impatience. A union was formed, and large numbers of members were enrolled; meetings were held at which inflammatory speeches were delivered, and the aid of professional agitators was invoked.

It would seem that the Treasury, in 1890, came to the conclusion that Mr. Raikes's suggestions were fair and reasonable; but, meanwhile, insubordination had reached such a pitch that it was impossible for the Postmaster-General to make any concessions until discipline had been restored. To have done so would have appeared an act of weakness, and the Postmen's Union would naturally have thought that their recourse to illegitimate methods had forced their Chief's hand. To have yielded under such circumstances would have been to strike a fatal blow at the discipline of the entire Service, and would have placed the whole department at the mercy of the representative of the Trades' Unions. A trial of strength was inevitable, and the Postmaster-General set himself to face it with his usual coolness and determination. His efforts were directed, in the first place, to keeping the issues raised by the telegraphists, sorters, and postmen, respectively, distinct, and thus preventing them from making common cause. This was a task of considerable difficulty, but it was, nevertheless, successfully accomplished.

In the year 1866 a regulation had been passed which prohibited meetings of postal servants to discuss official questions outside the Post Office. This rule was systematically disregarded by the Postmen's Union, and their action placed the authorities in something of a difficulty. The officials were not blind to the fact that the regulation was opposed to the spirit of the day, and that if they took their stand upon it the sympathies of the public would be entirely with the men. At the same time, if they were tacitly to allow it to fall into abeyance, they would be putting a premium on insubordination, and encouraging resistance to the rules as a whole. It seemed to them, therefore, to be the wisest course to take the bull by the horns, and to rescind the regulation; and accordingly it was announced in the Post Office Circular of April 19, that in future the employés might hold public meetings outside the Post Office building for the discussion of official questions, subject to three conditions :—

“ 1. That ample notice be given to the local Post Office authority that such a meeting will be held, and where it is proposed to hold it.

“ 2. That the meeting will be confined to Post Office servants, and to those Post Office servants only who are directly interested in the matter or matters to be discussed.

“ 3. That an official shorthand writer be present if required by the authorities.”

If left to themselves the men would probably have acquiesced in the new regulation, which not only afforded full opportunity for the discussion of all

legitimate grievances, but also enabled the authorities to keep in touch with their aspirations. Their professional leaders would, however, have none of it. They realized that Condition 2 was aimed directly at them, and if agreed to would deprive them of their position and authority. They therefore insisted that nothing less than full rights of public meeting and combination would meet the wants of the case. In order to emphasize their views, they arranged to hold a large public meeting on Clerkenwell Green early in June, in defiance of the new regulations. On being informed of this, Mr. Raikes issued a special warning, in which he pointed out to the men the consequences which must ensue if they persisted in disregarding the rules. The meeting was, nevertheless, held and largely attended. Upon this the Postmaster-General put his foot firmly down, and suspended a certain number of men and reduced the pay of others.

A certain Mr. Mahon, who had been one of the organizers of the dock strike, had been selected to lead the postmen's agitation, and throughout he endeavoured to make himself the mouthpiece of their demands. The Postmaster-General, on his part, from the first declined to have any dealings with this gentleman, although he had expressed his readiness to consider any complaint made by the men themselves at any time; and it was therefore essential, from the professional agitator's point of view, to provoke a crisis as soon as he felt strong enough to do so, lest he should come to be regarded merely as an

encumbrance by those whose cause he professed to champion.

Mr. Mahon opened the trenches on June 23 by writing a letter to the Postmaster-General, in which he informed him that the postmen who had attended the Clerkenwell meeting would apologize for their conduct on the following conditions: (1) That the circular limiting the right of meeting should be withdrawn; (2) That all the persons reduced or suspended for attending the meeting on May 16 (? June) should be reinstated in their former positions after making their apologies; (3) That the Postmaster-General should obtain the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury to immediately increase the maximum wage paid to postmen, including unestablished men, twenty-one years of age last birthday, who had been two or more years in the Service, making it 24s. a week in London and 21s. in the country; and (4) That the permanently employed auxiliary staff should be added to the establishment.

The letter concluded with the request that the writer should be the means through which communications between the postmen who were members of the Union and the Postmaster-General should pass.

Mr. Raikes, in reply, declined to recognize Mr. Mahon as the postmen's representative, or to hold any communication with him on official matters.

Mr. Mahon then declared that by his attitude the Postmaster-General was begging the question; but

this suggestion was successful only in drawing a second formal letter of acknowledgment, in which the writer repeated that Mr. Raikes was willing to receive any representation from the postmen forwarded in the regular way, "or if he sees reason to believe that their views can be better explained orally than in writing, to grant an interview to a deputation from their body, but that between the postmen and himself Mr. Raikes cannot allow any other intervention." Baffled in this direction, Mr. Mahon devoted himself to the task of widening the breach between the postmen and their Chief, and in particular impressed upon the former the necessity of declining to concur in the new regulation which governed the right of meeting. With a view to stimulating the men into greater activity, a meeting was held in Hyde Park, on Sunday, June 19, under professional guidance, at which the official note-taker, who attended under orders, was roughly handled, and a number of disorderly scenes took place. In consequence of this some thirteen men were suspended. The prompt action of the authorities had but little effect, and a few days later Mr. Mahon boldly threw off the mask, and informed the public through the medium of the *St. James's Gazette*, of July 1, that, "the present struggle between the Postmen's Union and the Postmaster-General is entirely over the question of the right of meeting and combination."

It must be admitted that the strike leader had shown some dexterity in persuading the men to adopt

this platform. He insisted, and the soundness of his argument cannot be gainsaid, that if the postmen were to succeed by agitation in winning the rights of meeting and combination they would be masters of the situation, and, so far as wages and hours were concerned, would be able practically to dictate their own terms to the Postmaster-General.

The course adopted had this further advantage, viz. that a broad issue was raised which affected the whole of the Civil Service. The men in other branches undoubtedly sympathized with the postmen, but, knowing that their own class grievances were in a fair way to be settled, they were naturally unwilling to jeopardize their positions by assisting to enforce demands in which they were not directly interested. Mr. Mahon was keenly alive to the importance of inducing them to abandon their attitude of passive sympathy, and to take an active part in the struggle. He was well aware that the men generally were restless and discontented, and fondly hoped that by pushing to the front a question in which all ranks were, at any rate academically, interested, he would persuade a large number of them to make common cause with the members of the Postmen's Union.

The tactful action of the authorities to a large extent frustrated the effects of this move, but, thanks in some measure to the assistance of a section of the Press, the agitation continued to make headway. As usual, certain journals made a dead-set at the Postmaster-General, and did their best to foment disorder

and ill-feeling. In this latter object they were tolerably successful, for their entire ignorance of the merits of the dispute (or their wilful blindness to them) specially qualified them to give the worst possible advice to the postmen, and to buoy the disaffected up with predictions of certain victory and assurances of public sympathy.

By July 7 Mr. Mahon fancied that he was strong enough to issue an ultimatum to the Postmaster-General, which was despatched by messenger at 3 p.m. It ran—

“SIR,

“I am directed by the Executive of the Postmen’s Union to request that you will state finally by 8 p.m. to-day whether you will comply with the following demands:—

“1. That all departmental limitations of the right of meeting be cancelled.

“2. That all men reduced or suspended for attending meetings be reinstated in their former position, and the monies lost by them through stoppage, reduction, or forfeiture of wages or loss of stripes be at once refunded.

“3. That in matters affecting the conditions of work and rate of pay the department recognize the Postmen’s Union.

“If these requests are complied with you may rely upon the cordial co-operation of the Union in allaying the friction and ill-feeling which now exists.

“The Executive trust that your answer will be delivered to me at this address at the time specified; and in order to avoid misunderstanding I am directed to state that your failure to do so will be taken to imply a refusal.

“Your obedient servant,

“J. L. MAHON.”

The cool insolence of this communication argued a

degree of confidence on the part of the writer which was hardly justified by the circumstances of the case. Needless to say, no reply was made by the Postmaster-General.

On the evening of the same day a mass meeting was held at Holborn Town Hall under the auspices of Mr. Cunninghame Graham and Mr. Conybeare, but no definite line of action was decided upon, in consequence of a false rumour that the suspended men had been reinstated, and that the wages they had forfeited were to be paid to them.

So far, I have said little in regard to the steps taken by the authorities. They were fully alive to the gravity of the situation, and, under the direct guidance of Mr. Raikes and Sir A. Blackwood, every possible preparation was made for the struggle for supremacy, which it was felt was unlikely to be long deferred. They anticipated that hostilities would break out on July 8, but the early part of the day passed off quietly. Mr. Toombs summed up the situation in the following report sent to the Postmaster-General in the course of the morning—

“I am pleased to be able to inform you that there was no strike amongst the postmen. At one o'clock this morning we received a confidential communication as to the decision come to at the meeting” (Holborn), “the purport of which has been reported in the morning papers. It is not, however, there stated what was actually the case, viz. that the men separated upon the understanding that if additional hands appeared for duty at any offices in the morning, the Union men were not only to turn out themselves, but to turn the

new men out also. Mr. Mahon and Mr. Donald were to make a tour of the offices at 5 a.m. and organize a turn-out.

“At some of the larger offices extra men were in attendance, and the postmasters, who were on duty all night, exercised their discretion as to bringing them forward to the sorting offices or not. In one or two cases the Union men protested against the presence of the new men, but did not go beyond that . . . We deemed it advisable to call in the postmen who were off duty in order that we might see how far disloyalty extended. With very few exceptions all the men duly attended.”

Although the Service generally was in a state of ferment, the day passed off without actual rebellion. Disturbances, nevertheless, broke out at headquarters upon the discovery that extra hands were being employed, and were receiving instruction in the duties which would fall to their lot in the event of a strike. Several turbulent scenes took place, and the Controller, in order to put an end to them, thought it advisable to withdraw the new men for the time being.

The postal authorities spent the day in perfecting their arrangements. Strong bodies of relief men were placed in readiness at points where their services were likely to be required, and the assistance of the police was requisitioned, in order to afford protection to the non-unionists, and to maintain order.

On the morning of Wednesday the 9th matters took a serious turn. The scene of action in the first instance was the Parcel Post Depôt at Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell, where the unionists fell upon the relief men, and after a sharp fight succeeded in turning them

out of the office. At the General Post Office the first delivery was delayed for an hour, owing to the discovery that a number of relief men were present, under the protection of the police, and guarded by barricades. But after they had sent a telegram to Mr. Raikes, in which they stated their intention not to go on with their work until the relief men were dismissed, the letter-carriers were persuaded, pending a reply, to proceed with their duties. On returning from their rounds they held a meeting, as a result of which work was resumed in a perfunctory manner, most of the deliveries being several hours late. In the course of the day the demand for the dismissal of the relief men was reiterated, and several deputations waited upon the Controller, but on this occasion without success.

Mr. Raikes, who had taken up his quarters close at hand, spent an anxious day, for he had the interests of his men very closely at heart. The results of defeat must, he knew, prove disastrous to many of them; and almost up to the last he hoped that the unflinching front shown by the authorities would, when the pinch came, induce them to break away from their professional adviser, who, as they afterwards realized, was but using them as tools with a view to extending the power and influence of the Trades Union organizations, of which he was the agent.

Surrender on the part of the postal authorities was, of course, out of the question. The issue raised affected the rights of the whole community, and it

was impossible for the Postmaster-General to give way without betraying his trust. No fair parallel can be drawn between postal servants and men in the service of a private employer. The latter admittedly have the right to combine in order to secure a due return for their labour. But the servants of the State are a class apart. They enjoy many privileges unattainable by the ordinary workman; when they enter upon their work they understand that their services are accepted only upon certain definite terms and conditions; and in the event of hardship arising from any unexpected cause they have their proper remedy. Under these circumstances Mr. Raikes held firmly to the view that to grant a concession which would enable them to repudiate the terms under which they had entered the Service, would, apart from the question of loss of prestige, be a fatal error looked at from the public point of view. For there could be little doubt that if the service of the State were rendered liable to be disturbed at will by combination of its servants, who, by reason of the nature of their employment, could enforce their demands by bringing the whole of the business of the country to a standstill, very grave difficulties would have to be faced in the future.

By July 9 it had become obvious that there must be a trial of strength. The authorities were prepared at all points, and Mr. Raikes, after consultation with Sir A. Blackwood, determined that the sooner matters were brought to a head the better. Delays are proverbially dangerous. At any moment the letter-

carriers might be reinforced by the other classes who were trembling on the brink, and the scope of the movement thus largely increased. It was decided, therefore, to intimate plainly that the Department had no intention of giving way, and was prepared to take steps to enforce its authority. This intimation, it was thought, would either have the effect of bringing the men to their senses, or would precipitate the crisis.

That same evening the malcontents met in order to decide upon their course of action. Some thousands of postmen and others assembled on Clerkenwell Green at ten o'clock, and inflammatory speeches were delivered by their professional leaders. Mr. Mahon displayed more than usual lack of judgment, for, apparently under the impression that the victory was won, he frankly threw off the last remnant of disguise, and informed his audience that the contest was not a fight between Mr. Raikes and the postmen, but an important part of the labour programme. Many of his hearers, no doubt, turned this statement over in their minds during the next few hours, but for the moment most of them were carried away by excitement, and greeted with enthusiasm the announcement that they were not to take out the letters the following morning until they got word from him that Mr. Raikes had dispensed with the services of the relief men. He added that no violence was to be used to the "blacklegs," but if they would not go out the strikers should "pick them up."

It will be observed from this statement that the

men's leader had once more shifted his ground, and that the actual issue on which the battle was fought was Mr. Raikes's refusal to dispense with the services of non-unionists at the demand of the agitators. Mr. Mahon, who probably did not realize that he had had his hand forced, could not fail to perceive that so long as the Postmaster-General was in a position to replace the strikers by other competent men, the movement must prove a fiasco. It was equally obvious that if the agitators could succeed in frightening away the relief men he would hold the key of the situation, and would be in a position to disorganize the Service thoroughly if his demands were not complied with. It must be assumed that Mr. Mahon did not appreciate the completeness of the arrangements made by the authorities. He was evidently under the impression that by adopting the policy forced upon him, he would be able to strike a telling blow, which would rally to his standard the disaffected of all ranks, and bring the Postmaster-General to his knees. At the moment the signal was given, although a considerable number of men were hesitating on the brink, those actually involved in the movement were comparatively few, and were mainly drawn from one class of letter-carriers, and the parcel-post men. It was essential, therefore, from the strikers' point of view, to gain the upper hand at the outset, in order to give confidence to their fellows. Their chances were, however, early jeopardized by the bad generalship of their leader.

The leading postal officials spent the night of Wednesday the 9th in perfecting their arrangements, and on the morning of the 10th they abandoned their waiting policy and took decisive action. It was determined, in order to emphasize the attitude of the Department, that Sir Arthur Blackwood should strike the first blow in person. The Secretary, accordingly, presented himself at the Parcel Dépôt at Mount Pleasant at 3 a.m. on the Thursday morning, and then and there, as the men came in to work, dismissed without ceremony nearly one hundred of those who had taken part in the disturbance of the previous day. This act, it may be assumed, was no isolated measure, but was carried into effect with a set object in view.

It was anticipated that the postmen generally would be largely influenced by the example set by the men at the Central Office; and the leading officials were agreed that if these latter could be kept in hand, the chief source of danger would be removed. The Postmaster-General had laid his plans accordingly, and, while Mr. Mahon expended his energies in outlying districts, brought the strongest possible pressure to bear at head-quarters.

The men made their appearance at the Central Office at the usual time on Thursday, and we may easily picture the scene. Some wear an air of stern determination, others seem dejected and uncertain. Most of them, undoubtedly, intend to be guided by circumstances; even the more ardent are waiting the inspiration of the moment. But all, disaffected and

loyal alike, are animated by a feeling of nervous excitement, and look for some sudden and startling development. The merest trifle may cause an explosion.

As they near the entrance the men glance furtively at one another. Their pulses quicken as the great moment approaches. One or two of the younger men endeavour to express unconcern by whistling; but the effort is hardly a success—the notes gradually die away. Very few, it seems, can even find voice to pass a morning greeting to a comrade.

Suddenly the silence is broken by a faint murmur. The foremost men pause, and cluster round a notice posted where all may see. It records in grave official language the measures taken at Mount Pleasant a few hours before, and concludes in the following words:—

“Similar suspension or dismissal will follow in the case of men at other offices who, either by refusal to obey orders, or the molestation of those employed under direction of the Postmaster-General, impede public service.”

Again the men exchange significant glances. Then they slowly pass within. As they enter they note, on the one hand, relief men ready, if need be, to take their places; on the other, a detachment of City Police, evidently prepared for strong measures at the first hint of disorder. For a moment they hesitate, and that moment must have been a trying one for the little knot of officials gathered at one end of the chamber. But the pause for reflection is of short duration. One by one the men make their way to their places, and

enter quietly upon their usual tasks. Soon all are busy. Sir Arthur Blackwood, we may be sure, drew a deep breath of relief. The men themselves, perhaps, hardly realized it, but the crisis was over.

Attempts to carry out Mr. Mahon's programme were made in a number of the London districts, but they were mostly of a half-hearted nature. The moral effect of the victory at headquarters was, as anticipated by the authorities, far-reaching, and practically broke the back of the agitation. For instance, in the northern and south-eastern districts the men, who had at first declined to make a move, gave way promptly when they learnt that work was proceeding steadily in the City; while at other centres no trouble of any sort was experienced.

Outbreaks, nevertheless, took place in various quarters. At Holloway a number of men refused to go out with their bags, and were, in consequence, suspended; while at Finsbury Park insubordination reached such a pitch that the police had to be called in. Matters were at their worst in the Eastern District; the service there was practically disorganized, and sixty-three men were suspended.

In all, up to 6 a.m. about two hundred men were suspended or dismissed, and in the course of the day this number was considerably increased.

About 6.30 a.m. some three hundred strikers visited the General Post Office, and tried, without result, to bring the men out. They were more successful in other quarters, and the evening muster on Clerkenwell

Green was very largely attended. Their advantage, however, was more apparent than real, for, though many of the younger men were, in the excitement of the moment, delighted to join in the parades, and to have their ears tickled by professional orators, few, with the exception of those already suspended, were prepared to face the active displeasure of the Department.

Mr. Mahon, nevertheless, addressed the meeting in his usual confident style, and announced that on the following day the whole of the Metropolitan postmen would be asked to come out on strike, and to remain out "until Mr. Raikes knuckled under." By way of encouragement, he added that his procession, in the course of its march, had brought out over a thousand men, and he concluded by exhorting all postmen to obey the forthcoming summons, which would bring matters to a crisis by paralyzing the trade and commerce of the country. But the appeal fell on deaf ears. Mr. Mahon had, as usual, miscalculated his powers; and, in place of a general turn-out, Friday, July 11, witnessed what was practically the unconditional surrender of the men. They had lost all confidence in their leader, who, they felt, had not only misled them, but had proved himself incapable to boot. By the end of the day the agitation was well in hand, in spite of the final frantic efforts of a small minority, who succeeded for a brief space in impeding public service to some extent by means of open violence. To cope with this state of things the

services of the police were called into requisition, and by Saturday, except in the neighbourhood of the docks, where the roughs made common cause with the strikers, the service had resumed its normal aspect.

That the movement had gained little real hold upon the men is indicated by the promptitude with which large numbers of them seceded from the Postmen's Union without any compulsion having been put upon them by the authorities. For instance, on the Friday eighty-three out of ninety-four postmen at Whitechapel followed this course and apologized; while at Poplar the next day the men held a meeting, at which they denounced Mr. Mahon as an enemy to the force, and tore up their Union tickets. These were typical cases, and, indeed, throughout the Friday and Saturday applications for pardon and reinstatement poured in in a constant stream.

A glance at the figures tells the same tale. In all, 435 men were suspended, 172 belonging to the established class, and 263 to the unestablished. Many more took part in the processions and attended the meetings, but it would seem that out of the 10,000 men whom Mr. Mahon boasted he had at his beck and call, only a small proportion were prepared to run any real risk. The majority, it is true, were more or less discontented; and had the Postmaster-General shown the slightest sign of wavering, or had the strike been organized by a man of ability, the consequences might undoubtedly have been very serious.

I have already indicated the lines of the policy inaugurated by the Postmaster-General and ably carried out by Sir A. Blackwood. These two gentlemen worked together throughout in perfect harmony. They kept in touch with every phase of the movement, and whenever danger threatened took steps to nip it in the bud before it could assume alarming proportions. They had not much respect for Mr. Mahon as an opponent. He repeatedly showed himself incapable of contending on even terms with the men he had set himself to humble, and would snatch with ludicrous avidity at any lure offered to him. It was, nevertheless, necessary to keep a watchful eye upon him, for at any moment he might have blundered upon an opportunity which he would never have found of set purpose, or a chance spark might have caused a conflagration of which he could not have failed to take advantage.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the Government were prepared for the worst, and at an early stage took certain military precautions in anticipation of an open and turbulent outbreak. Thanks, however, to Mr. Raikes and his advisers, it did not become necessary to have recourse to extreme measures.

When order was restored, the Postmaster-General found himself confronted with the difficult and delicate task of deciding upon the degree of punishment to be meted out to the mutineers. He was strongly urged by a number of well-meaning people to reinstate the men *en bloc*, and had he listened to this advice he

would, no doubt, have gained greatly in popularity with the force, and have insured himself against any further trouble during the remainder of his term of office. But such considerations, it need hardly be said, had no weight with him. Personally, he was inclined to the side of mercy, but he fully realized that it was necessary to make an example, for he felt very strongly that the retention in the Service of men who had taken the principal part in defying the regulations, and had led others to forsake the path of duty, would serve as a standing menace to the authorities in the event of difficulties arising in the future.

The debate on the Post Office Vote, on July 23, afforded Mr. Raikes an opportunity of indicating the course he intended to pursue. He said that—

“With regard to the reinstatement of the dismissed men, he should only be too glad, if he found it compatible with the public interest, to reinstate as many of them as he could, but the public service must, of course, be the first consideration, together with the question of maintaining the discipline of the Service. All he could say for the present was that every application for reinstatement would be carefully considered by himself after the reports from the district postmasters had been received.”

The following day he received a deputation of metropolitan postmen, and in the course of the interview he informed them that he would most carefully investigate all the extenuating circumstances which could be alleged on behalf of each individual who had misconducted himself, and gave evidence of the real sympathy he had with his men by adding

that he felt as much as any of them for the families of the men who had committed these unfortunate acts, and, indeed, for many of the younger men, who had, no doubt, acted, not on their own judgment, but under pressure, and, he believed, in many cases coercion and even intimidation.

Although a few irresponsible politicians continued to denounce Mr. Raikes as a tyrant and oppressor, they obtained but little countenance, either in the Service or in the House of Commons. In proof of this it may be mentioned that the Telegraph Vote was passed on August 1 without a division. This result was peculiarly gratifying to Mr. Raikes, who found his reward, such as it was, for his untiring labours in the practically unanimous endorsement of his policy by both sides of the House.

The continual strain had produced its inevitable effect before the end of July, and for a week or more Mr. Raikes struggled on with his work, although warned that he was on the verge of a complete breakdown. His medical adviser insisted on the imperative necessity of immediate change and rest, but, in defiance of his commands, Mr. Raikes declined to quit his post until he had disposed of the Parliamentary business connected with his Department. Then, and not till then, did he leave England for a few days' relaxation at Royat, in company with his second son. But, ill and weary as he was, he could not reconcile himself to the idea of abstaining from work until he had fulfilled his pledge of going into each individual case of the

dismissed or suspended postmen. He took with him a mass of papers, and devoted what should have been a time of rest to toiling conscientiously through them. He briefly alluded to the matter in a letter to his second daughter, in which he said—

“Yesterday you would have been amused by the arrival of an *enormous* bouquet, addressed to M. la Ministre des Postes, from the Prefêt of the Puy de Dôme !

“So T—— has had to write a French reply of a complimentary character. But his writing—it is more execrable than ever ! But I have not time, nor indeed energy, to write all my own letters. Pouches have taken to coming with distressing regularity, and I have been days going through all the cases of the peccant postmen.”

Appeals on behalf of the men reached him from many quarters, and to all he extended the same unvarying courtesy and consideration. On August 10 he wrote as follows to Mr. W. S. Caine, who was interesting himself in the matter :—

“Grand Hôtel de Lyon, Royat-les-Bains,
“Puy de Dôme, France, August 10.

“DEAR MR. CAINE,

“I must write, although you do not ask for a reply, to acknowledge your letter of August 8.

“You represent, I have no doubt, a feeling entertained by many, and which, you may be sure, I share in no small degree myself, that it would be a most agreeable exercise of authority to condone in as many cases as possible the recent acts of insubordination which have been committed by London postmen.

“I sympathize as much as you can with men who, after many years of good service, have in a moment of excitement forfeited their employment and thrown away the fruits of

industry for themselves and their families ; but it would be a cruel kindness—at least, as far as regards future members of the Postal Service—if they should be led to believe that such excesses as have recently threatened to interrupt all the business of the country can be followed by the reinstatement of the offenders as if nothing had occurred. The offenders might, and probably would, avoid any repetition of their offence ; but their reinstatement would, in itself, encourage others to imitate it hereafter, with possibly even more serious consequences.

“I have devoted most careful consideration to all the appeals made on behalf of these men, and I have been glad to attach as much weight as possible to any extenuating circumstances that seem to take any particular case out of the ordinary category, and I hope to be able to reinstate nearly fifty, to whom my decision will be communicated in a day or two. These are almost without exception young men, who appear to have been coerced.

“Yours very truly,

“HENRY CECIL RAIKES.

“I quite think the men should have the benefit of their good P. O. characters in applying for other situations.”

The correspondence was subsequently published, and on August 14 the *Globe* commented upon it as follows :—

“Very extraordinary ideas of discipline and its maintenance would appear to prevail in some quarters, and the inconvenience suffered by the men in consequence of loss of work which they refused to do has been advanced as a reason for re-admitting the elements of insubordination. Mr. W. S. Caine, who is a member of the Postmen’s Employment and Relief Committee, has written to Mr. Raikes to suggest the reinstatement of as large a number as possible of the dismissed postmen, and Mr. Raikes’s reply will commend itself to any reasonable person

as a most moderate and just statement of the case as it must be regarded from the standpoint of the responsible head of the Post Office."

Mr. Pickersgill, M.P., however, took a different view of the case, and some time later, at a meeting at Victoria Park, accused Mr. Raikes of not having carried out his promise that the cases of the men dismissed should be gone into individually. This charge of breach of faith was brought to Mr. Raikes's notice by Mr. Sebag Montefiore (then Conservative candidate for South-West Bethnal Green), and drew from him the following response:—

" Ballikinrain Castle, Balfroun, N.B., October 2.

"DEAR MR. MONTEFIORE,

"I found your letter here last night, or it should have been sooner answered. I have not previously seen any report of the speech attributed to Mr. Pickersgill, and can only, in common charity, assume that he has been misreported. Any such statement as that alleged to have been made by him is simply untrue, and, moreover, relates to a matter as to which he had no opportunity of ascertaining the truth.

"What I engaged to do was personally to investigate each individual case of the postmen who had forfeited their situation by deserting their duty at the time of the strike. And although I was at the time disabled by rather serious illness, and strictly enjoined to abstain altogether from official work, I devoted the whole of one week to a most careful investigation and comparison of all the appeals, letters, suggestions, and reports bearing upon each particular man's case, with the earnest desire of finding grounds which might in any individual instance warrant a mitigation of the punishment which all the men had been warned must follow such an offence.

“ I should, indeed, have been glad, if I had been able, with a due regard to the future efficiency of the public service, to condone in a greater number of cases the misconduct with which I was obliged to deal. But I cannot accuse myself of any lack of sympathy with the men, or any want of consideration for any extenuating circumstances which could be discovered by the most minute examination of the facts.

“ You are quite at liberty to publish this letter.

“ Yours very faithfully,

“ HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

On seeing this letter in print, Mr. Pickersgill published a lengthy reply, and concluded by observing that, for the rest, he left it to the public to judge upon which side the untruth lay. I imagine that such portion of it as took any interest in the matter had little difficulty in deciding that the Postmaster-General had strictly kept his promise.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN England the Postmaster-General occupies a curious position. Within certain limits his authority is supreme; without them—and the transition is very abrupt—it dwindles to nothing. This the community, as a whole, fail to realize. It does not occur to them that the ostensible head of the Postal Service, in his degree, occupies much the same position as the master of a school controlled by trustees.

But the fact remains that, though in many matters of grave import the will of the Postmaster-General is law, he may not on his own responsibility carry out one single reform which entails increased outlay.

Though the advantages of a proposed scheme may be great, and the cost small; though the Service, from the Chief himself and his professional advisers to the humble letter-carriers, may be unanimous in their approval; though the public may cry out for its adoption;—yet without the sanction of the Treasury nothing can be done. And the giving or withholding of that sanction does not depend upon what the Post Office itself can afford to expend, but is governed almost entirely by general financial considerations.

The Post Office is one of the few departments of the State which is worked at a profit, and the

Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his capacity of trustee for the nation, is naturally anxious that that profit shall be as large as possible. He guards it jealously, and, as it is his duty to do under the present system, subjects any scheme which may tend even temporarily to diminish its volume to the severest scrutiny. With him lies the power of adoption or veto. The casual observer knows nothing of this. The Treasury does its work, so to speak, under cover ; while the Postmaster-General stands out in the open, a target for the arrows of the dissatisfied.

The system, doubtless, acts as a safeguard against possible extravagance, but it has its weak points. What, for instance, can be more absurd, or, from another point of view, more painful, than that a man who has done more to further some particular scheme of reform than any one else in the world, should be gibbeted throughout the country as its benighted opponent, merely because a superior power in the background has, for reasons of its own, declined to accept his recommendations ?

It may be suggested that in such an event the remedy lies in the assailed Minister's hands. But such is not the case. It is not permissible, as a general rule, for any Minister to excuse himself to the public on the grounds that his wishes have been over-ridden by his colleagues. His duty is to identify himself with the policy of the Government, to defend it, if necessary, and, so far as regards his own department, to accept the whole responsibility for any line

of action decided upon. It is, of course, open to him to resign, but, unless some question of principle is involved, a loyal and conscientious man would hesitate long before adopting a course which would tend to weaken the position of those with whom he had associated himself.

Mr. Raikes, for his own part, was careful to preserve a studiously correct attitude throughout the long series of attacks made upon his administration. But some of those whose experience enabled them to gauge the position of affairs began at length to resent the persistent and unjust calumnies levelled at the Postmaster-General, and to urge him to take steps to clear away the misconceptions of which he was the victim. To advice of this kind he turned a deaf ear, although his position was growing day by day more intolerable; and he must, therefore, I think, have been rather surprised when, on March 14, 1890, Mr. Goschen wrote him a letter in which the following passages occurred:—

“Responsibility thrown by one department on another only damages the Government as a whole, and does not benefit the department specially attacked. I quite recognize your difficulties with your immense staff. Sometimes it would seem as if a part of your staff believes that the Postmaster sympathizes with them, but that the Treasury frustrates his benevolent intentions. I think such an impression will only increase *your* difficulties as well as ours.

“The agitation now going on can only be successfully dealt with if we loyally work together. I shall do my best to prevent mischief, and to relieve you of difficulties, but there

ought to be a desire both on the part of the Post Office and the Treasury to face the difficulties *together*."

With the principle embodied in this letter Mr. Raikes entirely concurred, although in plain English it meant that the brunt of the battle and all the odium incurred were to be borne by himself. So far as he was concerned, the admonition was unnecessary, for he was fully prepared to fight what was in reality the Government's battle to the best of his ability, and in the event of failure to bear the whole responsibility.

It is true that in moments of despondency the idea of resignation more than once occurred to him. But the strongest arguments against taking this course were furnished him by those who, in urging its adoption, pointed out that if he were to resign upon the grounds that the Government would not accept the reforms he considered necessary, he would not only gain widespread popularity, but would strike a severe blow at those who had passed his proposals by. These suggestions settled the matter for the time. To take any step from which, even incidentally, he would derive benefit at his party's expense was, of course, entirely out of the question.

Before passing on from the financial relations between the Post Office and the Treasury, I may be permitted to quote from a letter which will serve as a practical illustration of the relative positions of the two departments.

The question of re-directing letters without charge to the sender had been brought before the Treasury, I

believe, more than once, and in the course of this year (1890) the Postmaster-General again called attention to the matter. In reply, the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote, on July 17—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“I have had some further information from the Post Office about the cost of re-directed letters. I am bound to say that I cannot agree with the conclusion that anything like the sum of ——— would be saved by the abolition of the charge. The loss would, I think, on the only information supplied, be very much greater. I had hoped I might have met you half-way, but I gather, from what Mr. Hunter has written to Sir B. Welby, that that would not answer your purpose. Under the circumstances, looking to the numerous additions to the cost of the Post Office Service to which we have assented, and to important augmentations of wages and salaries still before us, I really do not feel justified in sacrificing a considerable item of revenue for the sake of removing what is really a very small grievance.

“I am sure you have no reason to complain of any illiberality on my part. I have done my best to smooth your very thorny path.”

Mr. Raikes, however, continued to urge the point, and was eventually successful, though he did not live to see the reform carried out.

In Parliament Mr. Raikes was entirely successful in repelling the numerous attacks made upon his administration throughout the Session of 1890; but he was prevented by the complications of his own work from taking so active a part as usual in the ordinary business of the House. He, nevertheless, devoted a great deal of time and attention to the Tithe Bill, in

which he had a special interest, and delivered several weighty speeches on the subject. The history of the measure dated back to 1886, in the summer of which year the anti-tithe agitation in Wales reached a climax. At that time Mr. Raikes was in constant communication with the leading clergy in the Principality, who urged him to use all his influence to induce the Government to bring in a measure making the landlord responsible for payment instead of the tenant. This, they felt, was the one method by which a state of things which was daily growing more intolerable could be terminated.

It was not found possible to move in the matter during 1886, but Mr. Raikes did his best to persuade the Government to take it in hand.

In spite of many difficulties, sufficient progress was made to enable the Government to announce their intention of dealing with the matter the following year. Mr. Raikes took an active part in the preparation of the measure, and the tithe owners at last began to hope that they were nearing the end of their difficulties. But as the Session of 1887 wore on, hope gave way to despondency, as it became increasingly apparent that the Government would not have sufficient time at their disposal to pass their Bill into law.

Many of Mr. Raikes's correspondents could not bring themselves to believe that the cherished measure was doomed to extinction, and up to the last bombarded him with letters imploring him to exert all

possible pressure to get it pushed forward. Others suggested, as an alternative, a short stop-gap measure. But of all the suggestions made at the time, perhaps the most ingenious was contained in a letter written by Sir Francis Jeune (then Mr. Jeune, Q.C.) :—

“I have always thought,” he wrote, “that the solution of the tithe difficulty would be found in giving a right of action of debt for the tithe. In local tithe Acts, before the Tithe Commutation of 1836, such an action against the owner was often given.

“But sect. 67 of the Act of 1836 (6 & 7 W. IV. 71) contains the words, ‘Provided that nothing herein contained shall be taken to render any person whomsoever personally liable to the payment of any such rent-charge.’ Accordingly the Courts held that there could be no personal liability of the owner.

“I believe, therefore, that all that need be done is to repeal that proviso. But if perfect clearness is needed, it would be necessary only to provide that, notwithstanding anything in the Act of '36 contained, the tithe rent-charge shall be recoverable against the owner or occupier.”

Nevertheless, in spite of the efforts of its promoters, no advance was made towards a settlement of the question before Parliament rose, although the measure passed through all its stages in the House of Lords.

In 1888 the Government were unable to afford the time necessary for the passage of the Bill.

The main object of the 1889 Bill was to substitute the County Court for Distress as an instrument of recovery from the occupier. The Bill was introduced by the Home Secretary ; but the Government got into

a difficulty over their own amendments in the Committee stage, and the Speaker ruled that the proposal to transfer liability from the occupier to the owner (which was effected by the amendments in question) practically transformed the Bill into a new measure, and that it would be contrary to Parliamentary procedure to go on with it. Mr. Smith thereupon, on August 16, withdrew the measure upon the understanding that a Bill amended in the same sense would be introduced in the following Session.

At the beginning of the year 1889 Mr. Raikes had submitted to his leaders the rough draft of a Tithe Redemption Bill, the object of which was—

“to frame a method for extinguishing Tithe Rent Charge by machinery, in most parts borrowed from Mr. Gladstone’s Irish Church and Land Acts, or rather Lord Ashbourne’s adaptation of the latter, and from the Public Loans Act, 1875, and the Drainage Acts of the earlier part of the Queen’s reign.”

It was objected that much opposition would be roused by the proposal to utilize the national credit for the benefit of tithe payers and owners, and, in view of the fact that the Government proposed to deal with both Recovery and Redemption of Tithe in their own Bill, Mr. Raikes did not urge the matter further. As a matter of fact, the Government Bill was presented to the House shorn of its Redemption clauses. In the measure first introduced in 1890 they were again included, but they were once more dropped when the Second Bill of that year (which eventually passed into

law in 1891) was brought forward in the Autumn Session. Throughout the dreary struggle, which was protracted over five years, Mr. Raikes never once relaxed his efforts, and to him a considerable share of the credit of carrying the measure through is undoubtedly due. He was an admitted authority upon the question at issue, and was frequently called upon to reply on behalf of the Government to the attacks levelled at them. In the course of the debate on the Second Reading of the first Tithe Bill of 1890 he made a very effective rejoinder to the late Sir G. Osborne Morgan and Sir William Harcourt. He did not, however, make use of an amusing parallel which evidently suggested itself to him while the former was speaking. I have not a copy of Sir G. Osborne Morgan's speech before me, but the probabilities are that, as his general custom was when he was engaged in an attack upon the Church, he took occasion to emphasize the fact that he was a Churchman himself. At any rate, on a half-sheet of paper used by Mr. Raikes for the purpose of jotting down the points made by his adversaries in the course of the debate, I find the following entry: "Osborne Morgan, Churchman! Gargoyle, external ornament of Church." When the Bill was reintroduced in the Autumn Session, Mr. Raikes, in the course of the Second Reading, was put up to reply on behalf of the Government, and in his speech he dealt as follows with the contention that Tithe is national property:—

“ I demur to this being considered national property. On the contrary, every one who examines the history of tithe foundation will find it was given specially and entirely for religious use. It was given to the parish in each case. It has never been national property; it has always been parochial property. It has never been given to the State, and it never formed any part of the property of the State. I must apologize for stating these self-evident truths; but so much sophistry has been employed during the Debate that it is necessary to clear the air by downright assertion, which I challenge anybody to controvert.”

He concluded his remarks by contrasting the policy of the Anti-Tithe League with Mr. Osborne Morgan's assertion that his only desire was to divert the tithe to some other purpose. It had been stated in the course of the debate that only “a few ignorant people” had ever thought that they could get out of the payment of tithe altogether. Mr. Raikes was well aware that such was not the case, and that the agitation against the Church in Wales gained much of its strength from the widespread belief that disestablishment spelt the abolition of tithe. So firmly rooted is this idea, that even the introduction of Mr. Asquith's celebrated measure failed to dispel it. And, speaking from personal experience, I may add that, in Wales, those who believe that Disestablishment would make an end of tithe, though undoubtedly ignorant, are by no means few in numbers.

Mr. Raikes did his share of platform work during the spring of 1890, and amongst other places delivered speeches at Bristol, Nuneaton, and Ipswich. His

address at Bristol was devoted mainly to the findings of the Parnell Commission. He ridiculed the suggestion that because the *Times* had failed to establish direct complicity with murder in respect of one person against whom the charge was made, that therefore the whole Irish party was whitewashed. But he reserved the hottest vials of his wrath for those members of the Liberal party "who had been the abettors of treason and crime in the persons of their allies."

"They might," he said, "be quite satisfied that when the facts ascertained, set down, and judged by the Royal Commission, were in the hands of all Englishmen there would spring up in the country a feeling, not of dislike, not of distrust, not even of contempt, but a feeling of loathing, of detestation, and of horror for those ex-Ministers of the Crown and their political associates who had touched the unclean thing, and who with all the advantages of their English training, with all their proficiency in the ordinary moral code, had ventured to make themselves the apologists, and even the panegyrists of crime and treason."

This fine piece of invective called forth a chorus of bitter disapprobation from the Radical Press, but Mr. Raikes pursued his way unmoved, and in subsequent speeches abated not a jot of his condemnation. Curiously enough, as it would seem at first sight, he regarded the conduct of the Irishmen themselves as being in its degree much less culpable than that of their English associates. His reason, no doubt, was that the former were fighting their own battle in their own way, and according to their own code, while

the latter tacitly acquiesced in methods which should have been repugnant to them in order to lay their allies under an obligation with a view merely to political advantage. He drew a sharp distinction between the two parties, so much so that I remember his remarking about this time that events had tended, in a certain degree, to raise his opinion of Mr. Parnell, who could no longer be regarded as an agitator, but stood forth as a revolutionist, fully conscious of the fact that revolutions were not to be made with rose-water.

Perhaps the most interesting speech (from a biographical point of view) made by Mr. Raikes in 1890 was one delivered by him at the Bolton Church Institute on November 7. The address, which was of a non-political character, is an admirable illustration of his views on the subject of self-culture. A brief quotation from it will give a clearer insight into the principles which guided his own researches than any explanation which I could offer—

“Knowledge,” he said, “might help to make them more successful in life. It might help to make them richer, or more respected, or more honoured than their neighbours; but that was not the real secret of the value of knowledge. The value of knowledge was its own value. If they did not grasp the fact that there was a happiness in knowing things, if they simply looked upon knowledge as the means to an end, they laboured under a false impression, for knowledge was an end in itself. It was a thing within the reach of everybody according to their capacities, and every man and every woman who had grasped this fact, and strove to increase their store

of knowledge from the (? point of) view he had given, had a higher ideal of humanity than those who acquired much more information to be devoted to their own purposes and ends. If they loved knowledge as the means of self-advancement merely, they might get the advancement, but they would not get the real happiness of knowledge ; but if they loved knowledge because they wished to know, they provided for themselves a companion who would never desert them, and a friend who would never fail."

The strike at the Post Office has already been dealt with in detail, and I do not propose to refer to it further than to say that on its termination Mr. Raikes, who never overlooked a service, approached Lord Salisbury with a view to obtaining some recognition for the officials who by their unceasing vigilance and loyalty had enabled their Chief to weather the storm ; and he had the gratification of finding that the Government were largely prepared to endorse his views in the matter.

In this connection it may be permissible to digress for one moment in order to draw attention to the inconsistency of the views held by a number of the public prints in respect of Mr. Raikes's actual position in the Post Office. Some of them declared, in season and out of season, that the Postmaster-General was at constant variance with his officials ; while others as confidently asserted that he was entirely in the hands of the "old gang." Both were equally wide of the mark. Undoubtedly there was some friction at first ; but when Mr. Raikes had once succeeded in establishing his authority (and on this he never relaxed

his grasp), pleasant relations with the staff soon sprang up.

He was not long in gaining the confidence and esteem of his subordinates, many of whom regarded him in the light of a personal friend. Touching proof is given of this by an invitation which Mr. Raikes unexpectedly received in July. It came from the members of the Jubilee Committee, who proposed to wind up their labours in connection with the commemoration, by a small dinner. The letter was written by Mr. F. E. Baines, and this circumstance, in consequence of certain matters which it is unnecessary to refer to, gave it a special interest from Mr. Raikes's point of view. Its concluding sentences ran—

“We are thinking, however, of a little more than our own pleasure, in the prospect of seeing you amongst us as a guest. We should like to give a token, the only one in our power that would not be ostentatious, that your officers are ready to rally around you in a crisis which is perhaps practically over, but, it may be, not actually past.

“This will be no formal dinner, like the Departmental dinner in the spring, but just an informal one in which a dozen or two officers ask their Chief to take a country drive with them, eat a chop and drink a glass of wine.”

During Mr. Raikes's absence abroad his Parliamentary duties were undertaken by Sir Herbert Maxwell, and the Postmaster-General must have felt a twinge of envy when his understudy wrote on August 18, “Your replies to questions have been a light and agreeable task, with one exception.”

Mr. Raikes did not derive much benefit from his

stay at Royat, and in the course of the autumn he resolved to try the effects of the more bracing atmosphere of Scotland.

On November 20 he laid the foundation-stone of the new General Post Office, North, and he took the opportunity of tracing the development of his department from 1869, when work was commenced upon the western portion of the buildings, to 1889, in a speech in which he declared that—

“he did not suppose that there was any other institution that ever existed which could point to such a record of universal progress in every branch.”

Perhaps the most noticeable postal reform accomplished during the year 1890, was the reduction of postage to and from India and the Colonies to $2\frac{1}{2}d$. The difficulty in the way of the authorities was to persuade the Colonies to bear their share in the further loss entailed by the change, which was certain to continue for some years. Their assent was, however, received towards the end of May, 1890, and the new scale came into force on January 1, 1891.

The spirit of unrest which pervaded the postal service throughout 1890 added largely to the labours of the higher officials. As we have seen, the only class that really got out of hand were the unestablished postmen in London, but for a time the conduct of the telegraphists and the Savings Bank clerks gave cause for anxiety. The Treasury adopted a very firm attitude on the overtime question, which constituted the

chief grievance of the last-named, and the Postmaster-General had great difficulty in keeping under the smouldering indignation which was destined to burst into a flame the following year. Serious trouble was threatened by the sorters in the spring, and that there was no outbreak was, it seems, largely due to Mr. Raikes's personal influence.

The sorters' agitation, which dated back to April, 1889, was under the guidance of Mr. Clery, himself an ex-Post Office servant, and was conducted to a large extent upon legitimate lines. With Mr. Raikes's permission the men held meetings from time to time to discuss their position, and eventually they arrived at the conclusion that the "Fawcett Scheme," by which it was regulated, wanted both adding to and revising. A monster petition, signed by all the sorters, was presented, and a little later Mr. Raikes consented to receive a deputation. His decision was highly appreciated, for, to quote the words of one of those who attended on that occasion—

"Mr. Raikes made a more personal concession in consenting to receive a deputation on an early date in connection with the Fawcett Scheme dispute. It was the first time that a Postmaster-General had ever consented to personally discuss matters with the rank and file, and it showed the impartial and painstaking character of the man, and that he had no desire to shirk an issue, but was disposed to meet it courageously and fairly.

"The early date was soon fixed, and the deputation went over to the General Post Office, West, fully expecting to meet an official of austere aspect, with a tendency to pull them up severely, and to read them draconic lectures on the folly

of complaining, or the impropriety of having grievances generally. To their surprise they met an official who possessed a kindly eye, a pleasant smile, and who displayed a courteous bearing towards them, which made them feel at ease at once."

Mr. Raikes, however, was unable to agree with the deputation's reading of the Scheme, although he admitted that from their standpoint their contention was a just one.

In February, 1890, a mass meeting was held, by permission, in order to inaugurate the new Fawcett Association, and in March the Postmaster-General intimated that he had appointed a committee to assist him in determining the correct interpretation of the Fawcett Scheme. The Committee's report was unfavourable to the men, much to their disappointment; but they nevertheless kept their heads, for, in the words of the writer from whom I have already quoted—

"Evidences had not been wanting that Mr. Raikes had long been disposed, whether the Fawcett Scheme contention failed or not, to use his best efforts to do what he could to improve the prospects and position of the sorting force. Chief among these evidences was the remark he made to their deputation that 'he should like to be able to do something for them which would be a souvenir of his term of office,' and his appointment of the Departmental Committee almost concurrently with the appointment of the other committee to decide upon the Fawcett Scheme."

A second deputation waited upon the Postmaster-General later in the year, and in his reply he said that—

“They had urged their case with great reason and moderation, and he would give every consideration to the matters laid before him, and give his answer on as early a date as possible.”

From this we may infer that negotiations with the Treasury had reached an advanced stage.

Our writer continues—

“A few days before this interview took place, Mr. Raikes had caused to be issued the papers granting full pay during sickness to the whole of the London Postal Service. The great value of this it is hardly necessary to emphasize. It is almost equivalent to free membership of a friendly society, and no one who has a properly balanced moral disposition, and who has the misfortune to be sick in future, will forget when he gets his full pay during his time of necessary absence that Mr. Raikes gave it him as a portion of that ‘souvenir of his term of office.’

“On November 11, 1890, after many weeks’ weary waiting, came the much-talked-of and long-expected Raikes Scheme.”

It is unnecessary here to enter into particulars, but it was admitted on all hands that “this revision conferred great and increasing benefits upon the great majority of the sorting force.”

After Mr. Raikes’s death Mr. Clery referred to the scheme in the *Post*, the organ of the Fawcett Association, and paid generous tribute to its founder. He mentioned that many of his oldest friends were doubtful as to the probability of obtaining any concession from Mr. Raikes, but that he himself never wavered in his belief, although he could give no tangible reason for the faith that was in him. In the

article in question he explains the impulse that guided him in the following words:—

“I knew the man! If you say the answer is not sufficient—that on such a foundation one should not seek to rear the edifice I ventured to picture—I can only reply that you did not know him, and that I did. . . . In the light of their experience of Mr. Raikes I feel sure that those who then mistrusted our policy of looking to him for help will acknowledge that we were right. But this is so obviously due, that I venture to claim something more, and that is trustfulness in the future. Believe me, there is no greater wrong than to level mere suspicion at proved integrity.”

I have given prominence to this particular dispute, not merely because Mr. Raikes's method of handling the question was in its way a triumph of diplomacy, nor because he succeeded in the end in conferring substantial benefits upon the Service. My object has been rather to put on record the testimony to his worth borne by men who in the first instance looked upon him as their natural enemy, and with whom he, on more than one occasion, was brought into abrupt collision. The kindness and generous sympathy of the sorters when Mr. Raikes was taken from us, will ever be held in grateful memory by the members of his family.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE year 1891 opened inauspiciously with an outbreak amongst the Savings Bank Clerks. Their grievance was that, though working overtime was nominally a matter of choice, it was in reality compulsory. Discontent had been simmering for some time, but, as already mentioned, the Treasury were averse to changing the system; and, though steps had been taken to reduce the amount of overtime by increasing the staff, matters came to a crisis on February 2, when some two hundred and fifty clerks declined to continue overtime work when requested to do so. The malcontents were promptly suspended, but it would seem that Mr. Raikes did not regard the ebullition very seriously, for after they had expressed contrition he reinstated the whole of them.

It was, on the face of it, absurd that overtime (which, by the way, was paid for at the rate of time and a quarter), though nominally voluntary, should be actually compulsory; but, on the other hand, it must be borne in mind that in a department like the Savings Bank the work fluctuates very much, and it is impossible to avoid recourse to overtime at certain

seasons unless a much larger number of clerks are kept than are required for ordinary occasions.

It was, however, found possible to abolish the compulsory system, and on April 4 a new arrangement was made, under which clerks who were willing to work overtime in case of necessity were invited to give in their names. A considerable number did so, and the difficulty thus came to an end.* This was the last internal trouble with which Mr. Raikes had to contend as Postmaster-General; but the year was not destined to pass without a furious attack on his office from outside. The circumstances which led up to it may briefly be summed up as follows:—

In 1887 a Joint-stock Company called the Boy Messengers, Limited, was registered. Its object was to supply special messengers for the purpose of carrying letters and parcels, running errands, etc. Ostensibly it was a philanthropic rather than a commercial concern, its intention being to provide employment for London boys, and to improve their character and position by subjecting them to discipline and supervision. As soon as it was brought to the Postmaster-General's notice that the Company was engaged in the carriage of letters, he warned the directors that they were committing a breach of the law, but he refrained from actively asserting his rights in consequence of its benevolent aims and the restricted sphere of its operations. These latter were gradually extended, and early in 1890 the Company submitted to the

* It should be added that the staff was also slightly increased.

Postmaster-General a draft bill which it was proposed to introduce with the objects of (1) Legalizing the delivery of letters; (2) Authorizing the establishment of the electric call system.

The propositions cut direct at the heart of the Post Office monopoly, and Mr. Raikes, as in duty bound by his official position, announced that he could not countenance legislation in this direction.

The company realized that they could not lawfully establish the electric call system without a licence, and for the time being refrained from carrying out that part of their programme. But this branch of the business was presently undertaken by another enterprising concern which came into existence on June 30, 1890, under the title of the District Messenger Co. This company duly applied for a licence under the Telegraph Acts, and the Postmaster-General agreed to grant it on condition that the applicants would refrain from the delivery of letters. This they undertook to do, but it was discovered before the licence was granted that they had broken their promise, and negotiations thereupon broke down.

Under the circumstances of the case, Mr. Raikes determined to appoint a Departmental Committee to consider the position of the Post Office, and the possibility of coming to some arrangement with the companies. The Committee decided in December, 1890, that no arrangement was feasible; that the companies should be compelled to refrain from infringing the exclusive privileges entrusted to the

Postmaster-General, and that the Post Office should supply a service of special messengers. Arrangements for the proposed service were thereupon put in hand, and on March 11, 1891, the necessary Treasury sanction was obtained. The companies were then informed that they must desist from breaking the law, under pain of legal proceedings. The District Messenger Co. practically admitted that they had no case in law, and contented themselves with a passive resistance. In effect their answer was that they could not afford to stop unless compelled to do so. The Boy Messengers Co. took higher ground, and, oblivious of their own proposal to bring in a Bill to legalize their operations, contended that even under the existing law they did not infringe the Post Office monopoly. Nevertheless, when it became apparent that the Postmaster-General was in earnest, the two companies endeavoured to come to an understanding with him, in order to avoid probable disagreeable eventualities. But they had waited till too late, for the Postmaster-General, in view of their long-continued attitude of defiance, felt that the matter could only be set at rest by the authoritative decision of a court of law. When that had been done, it would be time enough to talk of terms.

On March 26 informations were filed by the Attorney-General on behalf of the Crown (who waived all penalties), asking for a declaration that the companies' method of carrying letters was illegal; that they might be restrained by injunction; and that

they might be ordered to pay over to the Accountant-General and Receiver of the Post Office all moneys received from the public.

From this point the District Messenger Co. may be left out of account for all practical purposes, for the struggle had in reality resolved itself into a trial of strength between the Postmaster-General and the Boy Messengers Co. The latter had at its head men of some influence and ability, and they could not make up their minds to surrender what promised to become a highly profitable business without resistance. They were wise enough not to rely exclusively upon their legal defence, and took steps to put pressure upon not only the Postmaster-General, but the Government as a whole. The Press interested itself warmly in the matter, and the public followed suit. "The convenience of the public" proved a splendid rallying cry. The directors of the Messenger Co. were lauded to the skies as the champions of public rights against the tyranny and greed of the Post Office. The fact that they had a direct pecuniary interest in the success of their company, and were in reality struggling for a slice of the Post Office revenue, was quite lost sight of. On the other hand, no censure was too severe for the Postmaster-General. The legal action, which in virtue of his office he was bound to take, was denounced as the grossest tyranny; his offer to take over the boys (in whose interest the Boy Messengers Co. was supposed to have been founded) was treated as a mere subterfuge, resorted to in order to secure

the services of those whom others had trained ; while the possible injury to the revenues of the country was entirely ignored.

In spite of the attacks levelled at him in the Press and in Parliament, Mr. Raikes pursued his course with his wonted calm. It was his duty to bring his opponents to their knees, and this he was determined to do. The supremacy of the Post Office once vindicated, he would have granted such terms as might have been approved of by the Government. But, while he retained his self-possession, the pressure brought to bear in other quarters was gradually taking effect.

On March 21 Mr. Smith wrote—

“MY DEAR RAIKES,

“We are being attacked on all sides by the friends of the Boy Messengers Companies, and it is necessary we should have a conference on the subject on Monday.

“Cameron has a notice on the paper, and he will get a good deal of support on our side of the House.

“It is necessary, therefore, we should be agreed on our policy. I will ask Goschen and Jackson to come to my room after questions on Monday if you will be ready.

“Can you send me a paper in advance, setting out the Post Office case ?

“Yours very truly,

“W. H. SMITH.”

The following day he wrote again to say that Mr. Goschen was inclined to come to terms with the companies ; while on the 25th he announced that the Cabinet had decided—

“Whether the law is declared to be on your side or not, to come to terms with the companies, which will allow of the continuance of their business, while the postal revenue, as such, will be protected.”

That the Government were bent on propitiation was evident from this letter ; but Mr. Raikes was not prepared by it for the next communication, from which he learned that they had practically decided to make peace without going into action at all. This information was conveyed to him in a letter from Mr. Smith, dated March 27, which contained the following paragraph :—

“Will you allow me to suggest to you to consider whether it might not be advisable to come to terms with the Messenger Companies before the law is declared—if it is to be declared ?”

At first Mr. Raikes could hardly believe his eyes ; but it soon dawned upon him that the Government proposed to yield to the pressure put upon them. Needless to say, he demurred strongly to this course being adopted. He argued, with perfect truth, that at the time when his leaders decided upon a change of front, the extreme violence of the storm had passed away ; there was no fear of a Parliamentary catastrophe, for the House of Commons was not sitting ; while the day of trial was near at hand. It was also obvious that if the companies were to receive their licences in any event, it could make little difference to them, as far as their business was concerned, whether they received them without the legal question being decided or after

it had been decided. But to give way before the trial would make a great difference, in his opinion, both to the Government and to himself, and would diminish their prestige considerably without in any way adding to their popularity. It would also lend some colour to the contention of the Boy Messengers Co. that they were within their rights in acting as they had done.

But the Government had at last made up their minds, and Mr. Raikes was informed that a settlement must be arranged. This was no very difficult matter, for ever since the law had been set in motion the companies had been anxious to come to terms. Under the arrangement arrived at, the companies submitted to an injunction restraining them from infringing the exclusive rights of the Postmaster-General, and in return were permitted to carry on their business upon certain agreed conditions.

Had Mr. Raikes been permitted to pursue his own policy, it is probable that, as far as the business of the companies was concerned, the results would have been identical.

In other respects there would have been a difference. In the first place, the question as to the legality of the carriage of letters by outside agencies would have been definitely decided. If judgment had been given in favour of the Crown, the matter would have been set at rest; if in favour of the companies, a weak spot in the armoury of the Post Office calling for legislative interference would have been discovered. If there is anything in the contention of the Boy

Messengers Co., this important question is still an open one.

In the second place, the Government and the Post Office would not have suffered a moral defeat at the hands of the companies, which, when all is said and done, were merely commercial concerns carrying on business at the expense of the taxpayer for the benefit of their own shareholders.

In the third place, the Government would not have placed themselves in an invidious position by their apparent readiness to yield to popular clamour at the expense of, and contrary to the opinion of, the Minister on whom the responsibility really rested.

Mr. Raikes had to face a good deal of criticism on the messenger question in the House of Commons, and matters culminated on the night of March 23, when the attack was led by Mr. Cameron. The Postmaster-General sturdily held his own, and the excitement aroused to some extent subsided when the House had heard his explanations.

About this time *Punch* published a rather bitter set of verses, entitled the "G.P.O. Cuckoo," but a few days later Mr. Raikes received the following note, which may, perhaps, be taken as a tacit admission that judgment had been passed rather hastily:—

"Whitethorn, Hythe, Kent, March 31, 1891.

"DEAR MR. RAIKES,

"You will find in 'Toby's Diary' in the forthcoming number of *Punch* a slight variation on the monotonous note about the Postmaster-General.

"It seems very hard, but I suppose the wind of newspaper criticism is tempered to the unshorn and philosophical mind.

"Yours faithfully,

"HENRY W. LUCY."

The "slight variation" appeared in the number dated April 4, and was couched as follows:—

"ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

"(Extracted from the diary of Toby, M.P.)

"*House of Commons, Monday, March 23.*—Easter holidays begin to-morrow; to-night last rally round Raikes; Postmaster harried from both sides of House; the contumacious Cobb begins it; comments on Coroner's conduct beginning to pall on accustomed appetite; references to delicate investigation in judicial circles falling flat, so turns upon Postmaster-General. Wants to know about the Boy Messengers? Pack in full cry; Raikes pelted with newspapers, assailed with over-weighted letters; late at night Cameron comes up quite fresh, desiring to 'call attention to the position taken up by the Postmaster-General with regard to the Electric Call and Boy Messenger System,' just as if he had at that moment made the discovery.

"In course of lecture Cameron produces sort of pocket-pistol; explains it's the thing you work the electric call with. . . . For a while Raikes had peace; quite forgotten whilst House, falling into Gane's attitude, listened to Cameron's fairy tale.

"'It's only postponed, Toby,' he said wearily, Cameron (having accidentally touched the wrong button) being promptly carried off to bed in the middle of a sentence; 'they'll be at me again to-morrow, and will begin once more, like giants refreshed, when they come back from the holidays. It's an old story; the House of Commons must always have its whipping-boy. Don't know whether you've sat long enough for Barks to remember Ayrton? A dead-set was

made against him, and he was not only driven out of office, but forth from public life. It's generally the Home Secretary who is fastened on. There was Walpole chronically reduced to tears. Bruce was chivied by the cabmen, and had his hat blocked by the publicans. The blameless Harcourt didn't go scot free whilst he was at the Home Office. Matthews has had a long run with the hounds after him. Now they've turned aside from him, and are yelping after me. It's very well for Matthews, but a little worrying for me. As Harcourt once admitted of himself, I'm almost human. I try to do my duty, and protect the interests of the Department committed to my charge. They come in touch with all classes, and naturally there is friction. Just now the howling is persistent, and, I fancy, organized. Perhaps it'll fall away by-and-by. In the meanwhile it is rather wearing, so pitilessly monotonous. As you said the other day, a new constitutional maxim has been established. Once Old Morality used to write in his copy-book, "The Queen can do No Wrong." Now he may add this other: "The Postmaster-General does Nothing Right.""

This imaginary conversation is couched in too despondent a vein to be really characteristic of Mr. Raikes. Nevertheless, it presents several points of interest. I will only refer to one of them, to wit, the suggestion that, "Just now the howling is persistent, and, I fancy, organized." This idea was, at the time, rife in the minds of many unprejudiced observers, and was not without foundation.

A curious example of the way, in which agitations are set on foot or kept up was actually brought to Mr. Raikes's notice on an occasion which I will not particularize. A gentleman connected with the Press, who apparently took some interest in the question at

issue, addressed himself directly to the Postmaster-General for information, and in the course of conversation stated that it had been proposed to him that he should take a line antagonistic to Mr. Raikes in the paper he controlled, and that if he did so he would receive an order for a very large number of copies.

The English Press is happily above suspicion as a whole, and in nine cases out of ten the would-be "nobbler" would meet with a disconcerting reception; but the fact remains (if we believe the story above narrated, and it is difficult to see what object its narrator could have had in inventing it) that certain of Mr. Raikes's opponents found it worth while to make efforts in the direction indicated. Supposing them to be successful in only one or two instances, their object would be largely attained. If a campaign is set on foot, in even one or two papers, which arouses interest in the mind of the public, it is, as a rule, quickly taken up in perfectly good faith by competitors, and soon spreads in an ever-widening circle.

I do not definitely assert that Mr. Raikes was ever the victim of a purely manufactured agitation, but I know that both he and others whose opinions are deserving of respect were inclined to believe that some of the attacks to which he was subjected were not entirely spontaneous. Their extreme bitterness, and the constant harping on the personal note, apart from other evidence, point strongly to this supposition being correct.

The attack upon the Postmaster-General in Parliament was renewed upon somewhat broader lines on April 17, when Earl Compton moved for a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Post Office, and called attention to the widespread discontent which he alleged pervaded the postal service generally. In taking this course, he unwittingly did Mr. Raikes a service. The *Standard* described the encounter as follows :—

“ Mr. Raikes’s reply to his critics was even a more brilliant affair than the collision between the Irish factions. Earl Compton, it must be owned, had placed himself at the mercy of the Minister whose Department was the object of his wild assault. We are by no means uncompromising admirers of the way things are done at St. Martins-le-Grand. But to impeach the whole system as faulty, and to propose a sweeping and searching inquiry into every detail of its working, was the worst way in the world to obtain a hearing for any reasonable grievance. Never was so comprehensive a charge supported by so meagre an array of instances. To justify the demand for a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Post Office, a serious foundation ought to have been laid. But both the proposer of the motion and those who supported it appear to have thought it sufficient to rake together the poorest assortment of scandalous odds and ends. Had Mr. Raikes been wrong in his attitude to the Boy Messenger Companies his conduct might have been explicitly challenged. If any specific grievance that called for remedy had remained unredressed there would have been some sense in procuring the judgment of the House on it. But to eke out a wholesale accusation with timid references to this or that complaint of a particular class of *employés*, and a general statement that discontent was rife, and that protests were smothered by Departmental superiors, was to court

defeat. The accusers of the Post Office have certainly made nothing by their headlong vagueness, for the House refused by one hundred and sixty-three votes to ninety-three to grant the inquiry suggested. The Debate, nevertheless, gave the Postmaster-General an opportunity of making some announcements which the country will welcome. A permanent addition has been made to the number of the *employés* in the Savings Bank Department, and thus the grievance of overtime, which was the only solid asset in Earl Compton's budget, has been definitely removed. It is good news, also, to hear that steps have been taken to render promotion regular and equable; and the hope may well be entertained that the discontent which has given outside agitators a text, and has been clutched at by politicians who trade in popularity, will soon be a thing of the past. Mr. Raikes, indeed, with the faith which is eminently proper in a Parliamentary Chief, holds that never was there a time when the servants of the Post Office were so well satisfied with their position. The wish may possibly be father to the thought; but where a kindly disposition exists in high places, good intentions can always convert themselves into pleasant realities."

The members for the University were not often troubled with letters of remonstrance from their constituents, but one or two of the latter thought fit to express their dissatisfaction with their attitude on the Opium Question. On the other hand, letters of encouragement and sympathy were frequently received by Mr. Raikes. I venture to quote a few lines from one written by Dr. Perowne about this time:—

"I have been often tempted to write to you during the late fierce assault on your position as head of a great department of the public service, to assure you of my entire sympathy with you, both in your firm resistance to interested assailants and in the annoyance which it must have caused you.

“To one who is outside the cyclone it seems strange that the crew and passengers should do all in their power to embarrass the captain and officers of the vessel at a time when the management requires a cool head and undisturbed attention ; and I often wish that the people could be taught the duty of submitting their own judgment to that of the skilled and responsible officers of the Government.”

Expressions of confidence such as this always touched Mr. Raikes deeply, and at times afforded very real comfort.

Mr. Alfred Austin, in a letter written on May 9, some time after the final struggle was over, took a cheery, if somewhat material, view of the situation. After expressing regret at having missed “meeting you at the place you have sung of in a living and a dead language,” * he goes on to say—

“I have observed with no little pleasure that the Post Office has raised no little Olympic dust of late. I hope it will help to carry the Charioteer to the legitimate goal of his ambition.” .

I don't think I have mentioned before that Mr. Raikes always looked upon Mr. Austin as Lord Tennyson's legitimate successor when the time should come ; although he confessed that he preferred the present Laureate's prose to his poetry. It should be added, lest this should sound like faint praise, that he considered his friend's prose to be of the very highest quality.

After the signal defeat of Lord Compton and his allies the Post Office enjoyed a period of comparative

* Monaco.

quietude. Mr. Raikes's labours in connection with the Office were, however, by no means at an end. He had in hand a number of important reforms, to which it will presently be necessary to refer briefly, as they mark the last act in the drama ushered in by the strike. Meanwhile we may take a glance at other events which helped to make the last few months of Mr. Raikes's life not the least busy of its periods.

His appearances on public platforms were not very numerous, but he delivered speeches at Lymm, Chirk, Mold, and Cambridge, amongst other places. The meeting at Lymm was of special interest to the Postmaster-General, as it was held in support of the candidature of Mr. Coningsby Disraeli. It gave Mr. Raikes much pleasure to be able to lend a hand to the nephew of his old Chief at the outset of his political career, and this was not diminished by the fact that he had been on terms of intimacy with Mr. Disraeli's family for many years. The other meetings do not call for any particular notice.

Few things ever gave Mr. Raikes more pleasure than the offer of the post of Chancellor of the Diocese of St. Asaph, which was made by the Bishop early in the year. Nowadays the position is not one of great dignity or importance. But though he could ill afford to curtail his scanty leisure by adding to his duties even to the small extent entailed by the acceptance of such a post, Mr. Raikes gladly availed himself of the opportunity of reviving in his family the title so long and honourably borne by his grandfather, who had

been Chancellor of the Diocese of Chester in years gone by.

The Bishop was aware that Mr. Raikes was well qualified to undertake the duties of the position, but it came as rather a surprise both to him and the Registrar when they discovered that the new Chancellor possessed a remarkable amount of technical knowledge. That such was the case, was made manifest on the first occasion he was called upon to exercise his functions. The explanation is a very simple one. Mr. Raikes's characteristic thoroughness led him, as soon as the appointment was offered him, to procure the various works which dealt with the branch of the law he was expected to administer, and his powers of rapid assimilation enabled him to master their contents in a comparatively brief period of time.

It has already been mentioned that the Tithe Bill was passed into law in the course of this Session. Considerable progress had been made with it during the Autumn Session of 1890, but all concerned must have drawn a deep breath of relief when their labours came to an end. During the Committee stage Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who was in charge of the measure, displayed great skill and tact on more than one occasion. One particular instance of "management" delighted Mr. Raikes, and he referred to it more than once in my hearing. It was proposed by the Bill that the powers then possessed by a County Court official should be extended to a new officer to be appointed under the Act. A Welsh member moved

the addition of the words "no greater and no less" after the word "powers." Sir Michael suggested that the proposed sentence was merely surplusage, but certain members declined to take this view, and there seemed every prospect of an animated debate, when the Minister once more interposed with the remark that the words were harmless, though unnecessary, and that he would accept them in preference to having the time of the House wasted over such a trifling matter. Instantly half a dozen members sprang to their feet. "Stay," resumed the President of the Board of Trade. "It must be understood that I only accept the amendment on the understanding that there is no further debate on the subject." Simultaneously the gallant six subsided, and a ripple of laughter travelled round the House.

The opponents of the Establishment mustered in full force on February 20, when Mr. Pritchard Morgan brought forward his annual motion in favour of dis-establishing the Church in Wales. His proposition was to the effect that the continuance of the Established Church in Wales was an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist. Mr. Gladstone lent his weighty support to this contention, and Mr. Raikes was put up to lead the opposition by the Government. His speech, as he himself admitted, was of a controversial nature, and his method of dealing with the "national feeling," upon which Mr. Gladstone's argument was based, made the Welsh members very indignant. He argued that—

“ There was nothing in the history of the Welsh people which entitled them to attribute the word ‘ national ’ to those feelings which were racial, perhaps, and characteristic, but were not national because there was no such thing as a Welsh nation. Hon. gentlemen who disputed that should apply to their leader for information on the secular history of their country. Anciently there were three principalities within the limits of what was now called the Principality of Wales—the principality which owed its origin and establishment to the fact that Wales passed under the English sceptre. Therefore he contended that to call the Welsh people a nation was grossly to exaggerate and wholly to misrepresent the facts of the case.”

His concluding remarks, addressed rather to the main body of Liberals than to the Welsh section, constitute a grave warning—

“ He had to thank the House for having listened so considerately to a speech which in its main features had been controversial ; but he was quite sure that whatever might be the attitude of hon. gentlemen opposite with regard to this question, if they thought they were going to improve the position of this country or of their own party by pandering to this pseudo-national chimera, which was constantly being put forward as a stalking-horse for electioneering purposes, they would find they had created for themselves a new difficulty nearer home than Ireland, which would again perplex and hamper their legislative efforts, if they ever again had a majority in that House. As the country was told that the first result of their return was to be a Parliament in which Ireland stopped the way, so probably their next Parliament would be one in which Wales stopped the way ; and when they had come to the separation of Wales on the same lines as the separation of Ireland was now proposed, the country would again have legislation proposed, not on grounds of principle, not with any regard to constitutional principle or

national unity, but based upon the narrower and baser foundation of sectional hatred and local jealousy—a policy which would well deserve the ruin it would bring upon those who made themselves responsible for it.”

The debate furnished one amusing incident. At its close blank dismay fell upon the late Sir G. O. Morgan and the late Mr. Byron Reed. Each of these gentlemen had waited for the other to speak, with the express intention of following and demolishing his opponent. When Mr. Dillwyn demanded the closure at midnight, both were shut out, and two speeches remained unspoken.

The influenza claimed many victims during 1891, but Mr. Raikes did not fall a prey to its ravages, as many of his fellow-members did. In a letter written to his second daughter on May 14 he alludes to the departure of Mr. Smith to his yacht, to the difficulty Mr. Goschen found in handling the Irish members, and to the consequent prospect of long sittings, and goes on to say—

“So my plans are hopelessly vague, and we do not know when we can get away, and when we must come back. I will telegraph to-morrow if I can get away, but rather fancy it will not be before the Irish mail, in which case I must sleep at Chester, and come out by the ten train in the morning. Such is life! But it is a comfort to have got you all away from the London influenza, and not to have succumbed to it one's self. A Liberal Unionist member said to me just now, ‘So long as Goschen and Balfour and you are here, it is the survival of the fittest’—such a pretty compliment!”

When the Postmaster-General had finally disposed of the attacks on his administration, he busied himself

in forwarding the various schemes of reform which had taxed his energies for some time previously. He was successful in steering the Post Office Acts Amendment Bill through Parliament, although it would seem from a letter of Mr. Labouchere's, in which he mentioned that, "Cameron had intended to object to the Second Reading, and all the men round me wanted to object in order to go to bed," that it was threatened (not, perhaps, by any very substantial danger) at one portion of its career. It reached its Third Reading on July 2, and, in a letter written that day to his son Thomas, Mr. Raikes alluded briefly to certain symptoms which, in the light of later events, may be regarded as the beginning of the end. He wrote—

"Since you went away I have been having very bad headaches, which at times almost unfit me for work. But I must get my Post Office Reform Bill through the House to-night. I am inclined to think that I have taken too much quinine in order to keep off the influenza, as I am very deaf when my head aches. . . . We are getting on so fast with the Education Bill that we quite hope now to get away by August 1."

On July 14 he wrote again, in better spirits apparently. After describing his introduction to the German Emperor (who, he said, "is very affable, and speaks English very well"), at Hatfield House, he added—

"I am better myself, and have pretty well lost my headaches, about which I was rather uneasy, as I have never suffered from them before. But we are looking forward to our holidays very much, as you are, though we cannot yet find out where to go to for the seaside."

Mr. Raikes made his last statement of importance in the House on July 17. On that day, in reply to a question put by Mr. Cross, he gave an outline of the reforms he had decided to adopt, with a view to improving the conditions of service amongst the postmen.* He was seldom moved to enthusiasm by the work of his department, but on this occasion he did not endeavour to conceal the pleasure he felt in being able to bestow real and substantial benefits upon his men.

The concessions to the postmen were hailed with approbation on all sides. The Press was almost unanimous in its approval, and though Mr. Raikes did not, as a rule, concern himself very deeply with newspaper comments, he was, nevertheless, on this occasion highly gratified to find that his efforts on behalf of the postmen were appreciated at their true

* The main features of the scheme, so far as the postmen were concerned, were these : The two classes in London were amalgamated into one, in order to enable the men, without waiting for vacancies in the higher class, to progress without interruption from the minimum to the maximum of their scales. The scale of pay in the suburban divisions was at its maximum raised by two shillings a week. To the auxiliary postmen an increased rate of pay by the hour, and extra leave were granted. In the country, as in London, the two classes were done away with, and the scales at their maximum raised by two shillings and in some cases more. In all cases extra pay was allowed for Sunday work, and each hour was reckoned as an hour and a quarter. The result of these arrangements was that the men were paid better for six days' work than they had previously been paid for seven, and also that if employed on Sunday they received pay for a further additional day at a higher rate than for ordinary days. Another alteration applicable to all postmen was that they received an allowance for boots, which up to the time had not been included in the uniform. The cost of these reforms amounted to over £100,000 per annum.

value, and his action in respect of them largely endorsed.

The generally accepted view was well expressed by the *St. James's Gazette*, which, in its issue of July 18, 1891, printed a leader headed "The Right Sort of Concession," from which the following is an extract :—

"The Postmaster-General has, we think, done well to make these moderate concessions in order to remove any lingering sense of grievance. And he has also been justified in not making them sooner. If the men are inclined to say that what they get now is just, it would have been justly given last year, the answer must be that any indulgence then would have been a great deal too near the disgraceful behaviour of those postmen who had the insolence to endeavour to coerce London by violence. Men who had just been guilty of imitating the worst methods of the worst kind of strikers were not entitled to concessions. No doubt it was only a minority of the postmen who were actually guilty of such misconduct. But, apart from the consideration that the minority would probably have been much larger if Mr. Raikes's measures had not been so vigorous as they were, it would have been a mischievous weakness to yield while threats were being held out. It was also the fact that the majority of the postmen, while remaining orderly themselves, were suspiciously tolerant of the noisy minority until it became clear that Mr. Raikes was not to be bullied into submission. It was, therefore, inevitable, and also essentially just, that the whole corps should wait a space before satisfaction was given to even reasonable demands. Since, however, they have waited in an orderly manner they may now justly receive what they would probably have obtained much earlier but for the folly of the strikers. The form which the concessions have taken is judicious."

When Mr. Raikes said good-bye to his friends on August 5 few of them imagined that they would never see him again. He had been palpably in weak health for some months, as his unnatural pallor and languid air testified plainly enough, but the change had been too gradual to excite much attention. When engaged in his public duties he displayed all his old force and vigour up to the last, while in private, although occasionally seized with fits of despondency, he was, as a rule, as ready to amuse and to be amused as ever.

After leaving London the Postmaster-General spent a few days at Beaumaris, and then made his way to Ruthin in order to attend the ceremony of laying the memorial stones of the new buildings of the Grammar School by Sir William Hart Dyke. This was Mr. Raikes's last appearance in public, and after he had fulfilled his allotted task of replying for the House of Commons at the banquet, he mounted his horse, and in company with his second daughter rode off across the hills to Llwynegrin. A day or two later he suffered from a recurrence of severe pains in the head; on the 19th he took to his bed, and almost immediately lapsed into unconsciousness. Five days after, on Monday, August 24, 1891, the end came, and he passed peacefully away.

The verdict of the doctors was that death was due to inflammation and pressure upon the brain caused by overwork.

Mr. Raikes outlived his earliest political opponent Mr. W. H. Gladstone, by only a few weeks. How

deeply he was touched by the loss of his one-time antagonist is shown in the following letter :—

“ St. Stephen’s Club, Westminster, S.W.,

“ July 8, 1891.

“ DEAR MRS. GLADSTONE,

“ I trust you will not think I am intruding on your great sorrow if I send these few lines of sincere sympathy and condolence.

“ I would hardly have ventured to do so, but that I see some of the Flintshire Magistrates are to join to-day in the last acts of respect and regard for your son. And I wish that I had been able to be one of those so privileged, for assuredly I shared very fully in those sentiments. Though we were nearly contemporaries, there was something in his character so gentle and unaffected that he has seemed to me through all these long years hardly to have grown older than he was in 1865, when we fought our first Election Battle as antagonists. And I well remember how during that passage of arms, as throughout our many subsequent years of peaceful intercourse, he bore himself as a type of the Christian gentleman, rare enough at all times, and, I fear, not more common as time advances.

“ Knowing how very strong is the tie which unites all your family, I can well imagine what a bereavement is the loss of one who never made an enemy or lost a friend. I can only hope that the release from what might have been sad suffering may, in some degree, reconcile you to the separation. And the blameless life and quiet love of duty must be to you all priceless and consoling memorials.

“ I hope that Mr. Gladstone has not suffered permanently from the shock. At least, he will know how all his countrymen feel for him and with him.

“ Believe me, dear Mrs. Gladstone,

“ Very sincerely yours,

“ HENRY CECIL RAIKES.”

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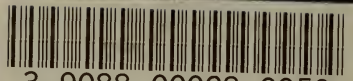
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